

# Soviet Literature

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4-5

April — May

1946



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Adress: "Soviet Literature", P. O. Box 527, Moscow

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4-5

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FOREIGN LANGUAGES PUBLISHING HOUSE  
PRINTED IN THE SOVIET UNION



## THE YOUNG GUARD

(Continued)<sup>1</sup>

The more striking the victories won by the Red Army in the Stalingrad area, along the Don, in the North Caucasus and around Veliky Luki, the more extensive and daring became the activities of the Young Guard.

It was a widespread organization, with branches extending throughout the district; and it was still growing. Its membership numbered over a hundred and the number of those who helped them was still greater—and not only among the young.

Victor Kistrinov, a friend of Nikolai Nikolayevich, worked in the administration as a clerk. An engineer by profession Kistrinov did exactly nothing in the administration, only gathered around him all those who like himself did nothing in the pits, and showed them what they in turn should do to ensure that the others also did nothing.

For some time, old Kondratovich, left alone like an old oak in a clearing after the death of his fellows, had been in the habit of visiting Kistrinov. The old man was convinced that the Germans had left him alone on account of his son, who sold drinks and was on good terms with the Polizei and the lower ranks of the gendarmerie. Though he it said that in moments of rare expansiveness the son swore that the German rule was less profitable for him than the Soviet had been.

"People are too poor, nobody has any money now!" he said in injured tones.

"Wait a while, till our lads come back from the front, they will hang you, then you'll be in heaven, where there's neither sighs nor tears," said the old man calmly in his rumbling bass.

Kondratovich, who was still not working, spent all his days roaming about among the smaller pits and the miners' homes, unconsciously taking in all the villainy, the stupidity and the failures of the German administration at the pits. Being an old worker of long experience and skill, his contempt for the Germans grew, the more he saw their incapacity to run things properly.

"Judge for yourselves, you young engineers," he said to Kistrinov and Uncle Kolya. "They got everything in their hands and from the whole district they get two tons a day! Well, of course, I understand that it's capitalism, while we were working for ourselves. But after all, they've been at it for nearly a century, and we—for twenty-five years—they ought to have got something into their heads! And then they're Germans, bragged about their organizing ability, and all they've organized is just robbery all over the world. Bah, they're just rot!" the old man rumbled in his deepest bass.

"Jumped-up jacks! They won't get away with their plundering in this country. They were thrashed in '14 and they'll be thrashed again.

Got big appetites, but no flair for anything creative. Upstart traders got to the top. . . . Made a mess of organizing industry, for all the world to see!" said Kistrinov, his teeth snapping like those of an angry dog.

And without any particular difficulty two young engineers and an old worker putting their heads together schemed to nullify those slight efforts which Schweide made to get coal.

In this way the efforts of the Young Guard were supplemented by the activities of scores of auxiliary helpers.

But the more widespread became the Young Guard's activities, the closer came the folds of the fine-meshed net which the Gestapo and Polizei had cast to catch them.

At one of the staff meetings Oulya said suddenly:

"Who knows Morse?"

Nobody asked why that was necessary, and nobody laughed at Oulya. It may be that this was the first time it ever occurred to the staff that they might be arrested.

The largest building in the town, the Gorky Club near Pit No. 1-B was standing empty. It was neither suitable for housing nor for offices. Oleg suggested forming a group of young people eager for amusement, and applying to the town council for permission to open the club, ostensibly to provide the town with entertainment in the spirit of the New Order.

"They may grant the request! They're bored stiff themselves," said Oleg.

In the hands of the Young Guard such a club could serve as a useful cover for the activities of the organization.

Upon securing a promise of support from the administration of Pit No. 1-B, Vanya Zemnukhov, Stakhovich and Moshkov, whom Oleg had marked out club manager as a man with a flair for organization, made their way to Burgomeister Stetsenko.

Stetsenko received them in a cold, untidy room in the town hall. As usual, he was intoxicated. Placing his puffy hands on the green tablecloth, Stetsenko stared straight at Vanya Zemnukhov who was very modest, most respectful, used flowery language and looked through his horn-rimmed glasses not at the burgomeister, but at the green cloth.

"False rumours are going around that the German army is being beaten at Stalingrad. And because of that, the young people. . . ." Vanya made a vague gesture with his thin fingers. . . . "are becoming unsettled. With the approval of Herr Paul" (the mining battalion representative at Pit No. 1-B) "and Herr. . . ." (he named the head of the educational department in the town council) "we are venturing to approach you about a matter of which, you, Herr Burgomeister, are probably already informed—and finally, in the name of the young people devoted to the New Order, we request

<sup>1</sup> See *International Literature* No. 7, 1945 and *Soviet Literature* Nos. 1 and 3, 1946.



personally, Vassili Illarionovich, knowing  
his paternal heart. . . ."

"For my part, gentlemen . . . Boys!" Stets-  
enko suddenly cried affectionately. "The town  
council. . . ."

Stetsenko himself, and the gentlemen and the  
ladies knew that the town council could decide  
anything, that everything depended on the  
Hauptwachtmeister of the gendarmes. But  
Stetsenko was in favour—he himself was dying  
of boredom.

So it came about that on December 18th,  
1942, by permission of the Hauptwachtmeister,  
the first variety performance took place on the  
stage of the Gorky Club.

The audience stood and sat in their over-  
coats. The club was unheated, but as there were  
as many people as the club was built for,  
cold, moisture was soon running from the  
ceiling.

The front rows were occupied by Haupt-  
wachtmeister Brückner, Wachtmeister Balder,  
Leutnant Schweide, Sonderführer Sanders with  
the whole staff of the agricultural comman-  
dant's office, Oberleutnant Sprik with Nem-  
tsova, Burgomeister Stetsenko, Polizei-  
chef Solikovsky with his wife and the recent-  
arrived investigator Kuleshov, a quiet,  
stolid man with a round freckled face, blue  
eyes beneath sparse reddish brows, wearing a  
black overcoat and a Kuban cap with a  
gold-embroidered red top. The Herren Paul,  
Herr Bekker, Bloschke, Schwartz and other  
officers from the mining battalion were also  
present, as were the interpreter Shurka Reid,  
and the chefs of Hauptwachtmeister and  
Leutnant Schweide.

Soldiers belonging to passing units, gendar-  
mes and Polizei sat in the middle rows. Un-  
deroffizier Fenbong was not present, being far  
too busy and in any case having no love of  
theatrical performances.

This mixed audience sat there in front of the  
curtain bearing the coat of arms of the  
U.S.S.R. with its hammer and sickle. But when  
the curtain went up, the audience saw up stage  
a huge portrait of the Führer, a product of  
great talent, with a certain disproportion in  
features, but near enough to the original.  
The show began with an old-fashioned vau-  
deville, with Ivan Turkenich taking the part  
of the girl's old father. True to tradition and  
his own artistic principles, Turkenich was  
made up as the gardener Danilych. The public  
applauded its favourite loudly. The Germans  
did not laugh because Hauptwachtmeister  
Brückner showed no signs of amusement. How-  
ever, when the turn ended, Meister Brückner  
clapped his palms together several times; after  
that, the Germans also applauded.

The orchestra of string instruments, the  
stage lights of which were the town's two  
guitar players, Victor Petrov and Sergei  
Kuleshov, then played the *Autumn Dream*  
and *Shall I Go to the River?*

After that, Stakhovich, stage manager and  
usher, came onto the stage, thin, reserved, in a  
dark suit and mirror-like boots.

Lyubov Shevtsova, actress from the Lu-  
kashovskaya music-hall!"

The audience broke out into applause.

Lyubov came on in her blue crêpe-de-chine  
dress and blue shoes, sang several wistful songs  
followed with a couple of rollicking num-

bers, accompanied by Valya Borts on the bat-  
tered old piano. She was encored enthusias-  
tically. Like a whirlwind she returned, this  
time in her bright figured frock and cream  
shoes, with a mouth organ, her shapely legs  
beating a devil's tattoo of their own. The  
Germans roared an ovation.

Again Stakhovich appeared in his dark suit.  
"Parody on a Gipsy romance . . . Vladimir  
Osmukhin! Guitar accompaniment by Sergei  
Levashov!"

Wringing his hands and stretching his neck,  
then suddenly without any warning breaking  
into a wild dance, Volodya sang: "Oh, mother  
dear, how sad I am." Sergei Levashov followed  
somerly at his heels like Mephistopheles.

The audience laughed, the Germans too.  
Volodya was encored. With the same exaggerat-  
ed, unnatural carriage of his head, he sang,  
addressing himself mainly to the portrait of the  
Führer:

"Eh, tell me, tell me, wandering tramp,  
What is your land, whence come you?  
Soon your deserved reward you'll have,  
When the sun arises, warm,  
Ah, then your slumber will be deep. . . ."  
All rose and roared with delight. Volodya  
was recalled several times.

The show ended with an acrobatic act by a  
group led by Kovalyov.

While the entertainment was proceeding in  
the club, Oleg and Uncle Kolya were monitor-  
ing the latest communiqué on the big Soviet  
offensive in the area of the Middle Don, and  
the news of the liberation of Novaya Kalitva,  
Kantemirovka and Boguchar, those same towns  
which when captured by the Germans the pre-  
vious summer, had heralded their break-  
through to the south.

Oleg and Nina were copying out this com-  
miqué until dawn. Suddenly they heard a  
roaring overhead that brought them to their  
feet in an instant. They dashed out into the  
yard. In the clear frosty air, they could dis-  
tinguish Soviet bombers passing over the  
town. The planes flew leisurely, the air vibrat-  
ing with the roar of their motors, and drop-  
ped their bombs somewhere near Voroshilov-  
grad. The explosions were clearly audible.  
Neither enemy fighters nor flack disturbed the  
Soviet bombers, and they passed over Krasno-  
don on their way back in the same calm, unhur-  
ried manner.

And suddenly it became clear even to the  
layman ignorant of military matters, that the  
Germans were finished.

Rumanians were fleeing along the roads  
minus their motor transport and artillery. Day  
and night they rattled along on carts or tramp-  
ed wearily on foot, their hands thrust deep  
into the pockets of their faded greatcoats, their  
high goatskin hats drawn over ears and frost-  
bitten cheeks wrapped in towels or women's  
woollen underwear.

One of the carts stopped at the Koshevoys'  
gate, and a familiar officer jumped out and ran  
into the house. The batman, his head down  
between his hunched shoulders to protect his  
frostbitten ear, carried the officer's large suit-  
case and his own smaller one.

1 Osmukhin paraphrased the words of the  
theme song from the film *The Gipsy Camp*.



The officer's face was swollen, and his tunic was devoid of epaulettes. He dashed into the kitchen and began warming his hands at the fire.

"Well, how are things?" Uncle Kolya asked him.

The officer did not exactly twitch the end of his nose—it was too frostbitten for that—his face merely assumed the expression it bore when he twitched his nose, and then suddenly looked like Hitler. It was easy for him to imitate Hitler because of his moustache and the frenzied look in his eyes. Then he rose on tiptoe and pretended to be running hard. He did not even smile; he was far from joking.

"We're going home to the wife!" said the batman benevolently, glancing cautiously at the officer and winked at Uncle Kolya.

They warmed themselves, had a bite to eat, and had hardly left with their suitcases when Grandmother, on an impulse, raised the cover on Elena Nikolayevna's bed and found both sheets missing.

Furiously, Grandmother dashed out after the visitors and began screaming at them from the gate. The officer sensing that they would soon be the centre of highly unpleasant female vituperation, ordered the batman to open the smaller suitcase. And there, in the soldier's case, one sheet was actually found. Seizing it, Grandmother cried:

"And where's the other?"

The batman rolled his eyes frantically in the direction of his master, but the latter, seizing his own suitcase, had already climbed into the cart. He took the sheet with him to Rumania, that is, if it did not fall into the hands of some Ukrainian or Moldavian partisan after he sent this descendant of the ancient Romans to another world, together with his batman.

Sometimes risky undertakings, by virtue of their daring, are more successful than the most carefully prepared operation. But more frequently, a big job fails owing to a single slip.

On the evening of December 30th, Seryozha and Valya, on their way to the club with a group of comrades, observed a German lorry loaded with sacks standing by the roadside, near one of the houses, without a sign of either driver or guard.

Seryozha and Valya climbed into the lorry and felt the sacks; they appeared to contain New Year presents. On the previous day there had been a slight snowfall, which now lighted up the surroundings; and although people were still on the streets, the boys risked tossing several sacks from the lorry and distributing them among the neighbouring yards and sheds.

Zhenya Moshkov, the club manager, and Vanya Zemnukhov, the stage manager, suggested that as soon as the young people dispersed, they should carry the presents into the club, where there were spacious cellars.

The German soldiers, and particularly their corporal, in greatcoat with dogskin collar and boots of imitation felt, raged and swore drunkenly when they came stamping up to the lorry; but the mistress of the house, wrapped in a dressing gown, protested that she had had nothing to do with the affair. And the Germans saw that she really had nothing to do with it. In the end they clambered into the lorry, the woman ran back into the house, and the soldiers,

turning into the valley, drove towards the gendarmerie.

The lads dragged the sacks into the club and concealed them in the cellar.

Next morning, Vanya Zemnukhov, Stakhovich and Moshkov met in the club and decided that part of the trophies, especially the cigarettes, should be sold on the market that very day, New Year's eve. The Young Guards organization needed money.

Illicit trading in German goods was the usual thing on the market; the vendors were mainly German soldiers exchanging different articles for vodka, warm clothing and food. After this, the goods would pass on from hand to hand, the Polizei closing their eyes to it all. Moshkov already had a whole staff of street boys willing and eager to sell cigarettes on a percentage basis.

On this particular day, however, the Polizei, who since morning had been conducting an unsuccessful search of the houses near the place where the sacks had disappeared, were on the alert for cigarette sales on the market. One of the boys was caught with cigarettes by the Polizei chief, Solikovsky himself.

When interrogated, the lad said that he had got the cigarettes from a man in exchange for bread. The boy was flogged. But flogging meant nothing to him and then it was thoroughly against his code to betray an associate; so in the end, bruised and tear-stained, he was flung into a cell until evening.

Meister Brückner, to whom the Polizei chief, in the course of his general report, mentioned the arrest of the boy, at once connected this with the other losses from the lorries, and decided to interrogate the lad himself.

Late that evening, the boy, who had fallen asleep in the cell, was awakened and led to Meister Brückner's room, where he found himself confronted with two gendarme officers, the Polizei chief and an interpreter.

The boy sniffled out his story.

Meister, losing his temper, seized the lad by the ear and himself dragged him along the corridor.

The boy was dragged into a room containing two bloodstained pallets, ropes dangling from the ceiling, and ramrods, bradawls, scourges made of electric wire and a hatchet lying on a trestle table. A fire was glowing in an iron stove; in the corner stood a bucket of water.

A portly, bald-headed German in light horn-rimmed glasses and a black uniform, with large red hairy hands, was sitting on a stool smoking.

The boy glanced at the German, shook with fear and said that he had been given the cigarettes by Moshkov, Stakhovich and Zemnukhov.

That same day, the Pervomaisk girl, Vyrikova, met her friend Lyadskaya, with whom she had shared a desk at school, but had not seen since the beginning of the war, Lyadskaya's father having been transferred to work in the Krasnodon settlement.

It was not friendship that bound them—they had both been brought up with an eye to their own interests, and such ideas are not conducive to friendship; they simply understood each other, had the same interests and found their association mutually useful. From early childhood they had absorbed from their parents



and the circle with whom these associated the point of view that everybody looks out only for himself, and the whole aim and object of life is not to let the other fellow get the better of you, but on the contrary, to profit at his expense.

Vyrikova and Lyadskaya had performed various social duties at school, and freely and confidently used all the words and phrases expressing modern social and moral conceptions. But they were always convinced that these duties and the terminology, and even the knowledge they received at school had all been designed to cover up their striving after their own interests and their taking advantage of other people for their own ends.

Although they did not display any undue excitement, they were quite pleased at seeing each other. They shook hands in the friendliest manner, little Vyrikova in a cap with earlaps and plaits hanging out over the collar of her cloth coat, and Lyadskaya, tall, red-headed, with prominent cheekbones and polished finger-nails. They moved aside from the milling crowd in the market place and began talking.

"A fine bunch, these Germans!" said Lyadskaya. "They keep on talking about their 'Kultur, Kultur,' but all they think about is stuffing themselves and swilling, and having a good time at other folks' expense. . . I'm disappointed in them. . . Where are you working?"

"In the office of what used to be the Meat Packing Plant. . . ."

Vyrikova's face bore an angry, injured expression; at last she could talk to somebody capable of judging the Germans from the correct point of view. "Only bread, and only two hundred grams . . . at that . . . they're fools. They don't know how to appreciate people who work for them voluntarily. I must say I'm disappointed," said Vyrikova.

"Oh, I had a hunch that that wouldn't pay, and so I didn't go," said Lyadskaya. "At first I didn't do so badly. We had a very nice bunch of people, and I spent my time bartering stuff in the country villages. . . Then out of sheer spite somebody gave me away, told them I wasn't registered at the labour exchange. Well, I paid her back in her own coin. At that time we had a man in charge of the exchange, an oldish man he was, a funny sort of a guy, not even a German but from some place or other called Lorraine; well, I became friendly with him, went out with him, and afterwards he even got me vodka and cigarettes. But then he got ill and they sent a great stupid lump and the first thing he did, he sent me to the pit. It's no fun, you know, working at the windlass. So I came along here—maybe I can get something better at this exchange. . . Have you any pull here?"

Vyrikova turned up her nose.

"I don't need any pull. . . Take it from me—it's far better to be in with the army. Because, they're only here for a time. Sooner or later they're shifted somewhere else, so you don't let yourself in for anything. And they're not so stingy—they know they may be dead to-morrow, so they're ready to fork out for a good time. . . Come around and see me sometimes."

"How'll I come? Eighteen kilometres, and then as much again to your Pervomaisk."

"Not so long since it was yours. . . Still,

come, and let me know how you get on. I'll have something to show you, and maybe something to give you, get me? Come around!" And Vyrikova nudged her awkwardly with her stiff little hand.

That evening Vyrikova's neighbour, who had been at the labour exchange, gave her a note. Lyadskaya wrote that "at your exchange they're even worse louts than in the settlement," and that she had had no luck and was going home "down and out". . . .

On New Year's Eve, the Germans conducted a house to house search in Pervomaisk, and in other parts of the town. In Vyrikova's house the note was found, laid carelessly among her school exercise books. The examiner Kuleshov, who was conducting the search, had little difficulty in inducing Vyrikova to name her friend and to tell of her anti-German views—with certain exaggerations, fear-inspired.

Kuleshov ordered Vyrikova to report at the Polizei station after the holiday, and took the note with him.

Seryozha was the first to learn of the arrest of Moshkov, Zemnukhov and Stakhovich. After warning his sisters Nadya and Dasha, and his friend Vitya Lukyanchenko, he ran to Oleg. Here he found Valya and the Ivantsov sisters, who came to Oleg every morning to receive their instructions for the day.

That night Oleg and Uncle Kolya had monitored the Soviet communiqué summing up the results of the Red Army offensive in the Stalingrad area, and the encirclement of the German Stalingrad grouping in a double ring.

The girls dashed up to Seryozha with the news, laughing and seizing his hands. And despite his self-control, Seryozha's lips trembled and he was on the brink of tears as he imparted his terrible news.

For some time Oleg sat silent, twisting his long fingers, his face deathly white and his brow furrowed. Then he rose with a serious determined look in his face.

"Girls," he said quietly, "find Turkenich and Oulya. Go round all those who are close to the staff, tell them to hide everything, and what cannot be hidden must be destroyed. Tell them that in two hours they'll get further instructions . . . Warn your parents . . . and don't forget Lyuba's mother," he added. Lyuba was in Voroshilovgrad.

Seryozha also put on his padded jacket and the summer cap he was still wearing despite the frost.

"Where are you going?" asked Oleg.

Valya suddenly flushed—she thought Seryozha was getting ready to accompany her.

"I'll keep a lookout on the street while they come," said Seryozha.

And for the first time they all realized fully that what had happened to Vanya, Moshkov and Stakhovich could happen to all of them at any moment.

The girls went out, agreeing among themselves as to who was to go to whom. Seryozha stopped Valya in the yard.

"Look out, be careful. If we're not here when you come back, go to Natalya Alexeyevna at the hospital, I'll meet you there. I shan't go anywhere without you. . . ."



Valya nodded silently and ran to Stepa Safonov.

Without waiting for Oulya, who lived a long way off, Oleg, Turkenich and Seryozha began discussing the situation.

Stepa Safonov and Sergei Levashov arrived without any summons, and a little later, Zhora Arutyunyan. He came without Osmukhin. That morning, New Year's Day, had been Volodya's eighteenth birthday; his sister Lyudmila had presented him with a pair of warm socks that she had knitted herself, and they had both gone to visit a friend in the settlement.

Turkenich sent the lads to keep watch on all roads leading to the house.

What should they do now? This was the question which they must decide, and decide at once. They realized that it wasn't just a matter of their arrested comrades, but that of the whole organization. Wait and see? They might be taken at any moment. Hide? But where to hide; everybody knew them.

Valya returned, and a little later Oulya arrived with Olya Ivantsova and Nina, whom she had met on the way. Nina told them that German gendarmes and Polizei were guarding the club, preventing anyone from entering, and that everybody knew about the arrest of the leaders of the club, and of German New-Year presents having been found in the cellars.

Turkenich and Nina suggested that this was the only reason for the arrests. It might be a hard blow, but it did not necessarily mean the collapse of the organization.

"The lads won't give anything away," said Turkenich with his characteristic quiet confidence.

Oleg, who had been thinking deeply, looked up. His face was set and grim as he spoke.

"We must give up any hope of a favourable outcome," he said, mustering all present with a frank, courageous gaze. "However it hurts, however difficult it may be to do it, we must give up any idea of remaining on here until the Red Army comes, of helping it from the rear—all that we were wanting to do only yesterday . . . otherwise we'll be killed ourselves and get all our people killed too," he continued, barely able to contain himself. The others listened, silent and motionless. "The Germans have been looking for us for months. They know about us. They've hit on the very centre of the organization. Even if they don't know of anything but those parcels, and don't find out anything else," he said, with emphasis, "they'll take everybody connected with the club, and dozens of innocent people as well . . . What's to be done?" Oleg fell silent. Then: "Go away . . . Leave the town . . . Yes, we've got to disperse. Not all of us, of course. The people from the Krasnodon settlement'll hardly be affected by this. Neither will the Pervomaisk people. They'll be able to go on working." He suddenly looked very earnestly at Oulya. "With the exception of Oulya. She's a member of the staff, and may be exposed at any moment . . . We haven't done so badly," he continued, "and we can disperse, knowing that we've done our duty . . . We've lost three of our comrades, among them the very best—Vanya

Zemnukhov. But we must disperse without feeling crushed. We've done all we could. . . .

Oleg relapsed into silence, and nobody was able to or even wanted to speak.

For five months they have marched side by side—for five months, under German rule where physical and moral suffering had made each day more than just another day of the week. Five months—how quickly they had passed! And how they had all changed in this time! . . . How much they had come to know of what was noble and terrible, good and bad, how much of themselves they had given and of their spirit they had poured into the common struggle and for each other. . . . Only now they realized what this Young Guard organization had been, and how much they owed to it. And now, they themselves must dissolve it, with their own hands. . . .

The girls—Valya, Nina, Olya—were weeping softly. Oulya sat there outwardly calm, her eyes blazing fiercely. Seryozha, his head sunk over the table, his lips thrust forward, was tracing the pattern of the tablecloth with his finger. Turkenich was silent, his bright eyes staring straight ahead, his lips in stern, determined lines.

"Are there any alternative opinions?" asked Oleg.

There were none. But Oulya said:

"There's no need for me to leave just now. We Pervomaisk people were not closely connected with the club. I'll wait. Perhaps I may be able to go on working. I shall be careful. . . .

"No, you'll have to go," said Oleg, and again looked at her very seriously.

Seryozha, who had been silent so far, said suddenly:

"She must go!"

"I shall be careful," said Oulya again.

With heavy hearts, avoiding each other's eyes, they decided to leave three of the staff—Anatoli Popov, Sumskey and Oulya if she did not go. If Lyuba returned and it was said for her to remain, she would be a fourth. They decided on possible meeting places—Natalya Alexeyevna's home, at the Kondratovich's, and at the home of that Communist woman working in the post office. They decided to leave as quickly as possible. Oleg said that he and the liaison girls would stay until everybody had been warned. But none of the staff or people who had been close to them should spend that night at home.

They summoned Zhora, Sergei Levashov and Stepa Safonov and informed them of this decision.

After that the farewells began. Oulya went over to Oleg and they embraced.

"Th—thank you," said Oleg, "thank you for being what you are. . . ."

She stroked his hair tenderly.

But when the girls began saying goodbye to Oulya, Oleg felt his fortitude slipping and went to the door. Seryozha followed him. They stood there, coatless in the frost.

"You understand everything?" Oleg asked dully.

Seryozha nodded.

"Everything. . . . Stakhovich may not hold out. . . . That's what you mean?"

"Yes. . . . But it wouldn't have done to have spoken about it. It's bad to distrust a person when you don't know. They're probably



torturing him already, but we're still at liberty."

They both fell silent.

"Where do you think of going?" asked Seryozha.

"I'll try to get through the lines."

"Me too... Shall we go together?"

"Of course. Only I shall have Nina and Olya with me."

"I think Valya'll go with us too," said Seryozha.

Sergei Levashov, gloomy and awkward, came to say goodbye to Turkenich.

"Here, wait a bit, what's all this?" asked Turkenich, looking at him hard.

"I'm staying here," said Levashov grimly.

"Not very sensible," said Turkenich quietly. "You'll be neither help nor defense for her. They'll pick you up long before she comes. And remember, she's a clever girl, she'll neither get away or else trick them...."

"I'm not going," said Levashov.

"You'll cross the lines with me!" said Turkenich sharply. "I'm still in command...."

Levashov was silent.

"Well, Comrade Commissar, through the lines together?" said Turkenich, as he saw Oleg coming out. Oleg, on hearing that there was already a group of five planning to make the attempt, shook his head. "Rather a lot of us now... Well, we'll say goodbye until we meet here again, in the ranks of the Red Army!"

They shook hands and were about to embrace. But suddenly Turkenich broke away, waved both hands and ran off. Sergei Levashov shook hands with Oleg and followed Turkenich.

Stepa Safonov who had relatives in Kamensk decided to await the arrival of the Red Army here. But there was a conflict raging in Zhora's heart about which he could say nothing. He realized, however, that he could not stay. Perhaps after all he would have to go to his uncle in Novocherkassk, whom he had failed to reach when he had tried to get there before with Vanya Zemnukhov.... Zhora suddenly recalled all his wanderings with Vanya, his eyes filled with tears and he went out into the street.

For some minutes the five remained—Oleg, Seryozha and the girls. They decided that it was better for Seryozha not to return home, Olya would let his parents know through Vitya Lukyanchenko.

Then Valya, Nina and Olya left to inform the members of the organization of the decision which had been taken, while Seryozha put on his coat and went to stand guard; he felt that Oleg must have a few minutes alone with his family.

While this meeting was taking place in grandmother's room, Oleg's family learned of the arrest of Zemnukhov and the other two, and knew that the young people were discussing it.

There were arms in the house, leaflets and material for red flags; part of these Elena Nikolayevna and Uncle Kolya concealed, part they burned. Uncle Kolya buried the wireless set in the cellar under the kitchen, covered it with earth and then stood a barrel of pickled cabbage on top.

When this was done, they gathered in Uncle Kolya's room, replying mechanically to the chatter of Marina's little boy as they awaited the result of the discussion like accused waiting for sentence.

The door closed behind the last of the young folks, and Oleg entered the room. Everybody turned to him. His face had lost all traces of inner conflict and of action but at the same time it had lost the last trace of boyhood. His face now bore lines of deep suffering.

"Mum..." he said. "And you, Grannie... And you, Kolya and Marina..." He laid his hand on the head of Marina's little boy, who was clinging to his legs. "I shall have to say goodbye. Give me a hand in getting ready... And then we'll sit together for a little while, as we used to do... long ago," and a faint shadow of a smile, distant and tender, touched his eyes and lips.

The family rose and gathered round him.

They flutter, those mother's hands, flutter like birds over the tiniest, softest garments, when as yet there is nobody to wear them, when still, with sharp, faint heartbeats the child stirs in the womb; they flutter, as they gently adjust the fleecy wrappings for the first outing; they flutter as they prepare the child for school, then for the first journey from home, and the departure for more distant parts—all life is partings and meetings, rare moments of happiness, and lasting pain; they flutter as long as there is anybody to tend, as long as hope lives, they flutter when hope had died, preparing the child for the grave....

There was plenty to do for all. Together with Uncle Kolya, they still had to dispose of documents. The diary had to be burned. Somebody sewed his Youth League card into the lining of his jacket. Underwear—at least one change—had to be mended. Everything was packed into a kitbag—food, soap, toothbrush, needles and thread, black and white. An old fur cap with earlaps was found for Seryozha Tyulenin. And more food in another sack for Seryozha. Indeed, there would be five of them!

The only thing for which they found no time was to sit together as they used to do... Seryozha kept coming and going, then Valya, Nina and Olya returned. Night was falling. It was time to say goodbye....

Nobody shed tears. Grandmother Vera took a last look over everything, fastening up a button here, adjusting a bag there. She convulsively clasped each of them in her arms and then pushed them away, but Oleg she held the longest, pressing her sharp chin against his cap.

Oleg took his mother's hand and they went into the other room.

"Forgive me," he said.

The mother ran out into the yard, where the frost seized her face and legs in an icy grip. She could no longer see them, she could only hear their feet crunching the snow, the sound became fainter and fainter, and then that too ceased. And still she stood there under the dark, starry sky....

At dawn, Elena Nikolayevna, who had not closed an eye all night, heard a knock at the door. Hastily throwing on a dressing gown, she asked:



"Who's there?"

There were four of them—the Polizei chief Solikovskiy, Unteroffizier Fenbong and two soldiers. They asked for Oleg. Elena Nikolayevna said that he had gone to the country to exchange something for food.

They searched the house and arrested all the members of the family, including Grandmother Vera and Marina with her three-year-old son. Grandmother hardly had time to ask her neighbours, the Saplins, to keep an eye on the house.

In the prison they were placed in different cells. Marina and her boy found themselves in a large cell where there were many women who had nothing whatsoever to do with the Young Guard. But among them were Maria Andreyevna Borts and Seryozha Tyulenin's sister, Fenya, who lived with her children in the country, apart from her family. Marina learned from Fenya that the old people, Alexandra Vassilyevna and even gnarled old Granddad with his crutch had been taken, but the two sisters, Nadya and Dasha, had succeeded in getting away.

Vanya Zemnukhov was arrested at dawn. He had intended visiting Klava at Nizhny Alexandrovka, and arising while it was still dark, snatched up a crust of bread, put on his coat and his cap with earlaps and went out into the street.

A band of wonderfully pure and rich gold lay along the horizon beneath a rosy-grey mist which spread over the clear sky. A few clouds, tinted with rose and gold, heavy yet airy, floated above the town. Vanya saw nothing of all this, but he remembered from his childhood that this was how it was on an early frosty morning; and a flush of happiness spread over his face, this time bare of glasses—he had put them in his pocket so that they would not become misted. It was with this same happy expression that he met the four men coming towards him, until he saw that these were German gendarmes and the new police examiner, Kuleshov.

Vanya recognized them at once. Kuleshov began asking him something, and Vanya realized that they had come for him. And immediately, as always happened in decisive moments of his life, he became very calm and self-possessed, and understood what Kuleshov was asking him.

"Yes, it's me," said Vanya.

"Bumped right into us..." said Kuleshov.

"I'll just tell my parents..." said Vanya. But he knew beforehand that they would not permit him to enter the house, and turning, rapped on the nearest window—not on the glass, but with his fist on the window frame.

The same instant Kuleshov and a gendarme seized him by the arms. Kuleshov swiftly ran his hands over his jacket pocket, and then over his trouser pockets, through the coat.

The window opened, and his sister looked out; Vanya could not see the expression of her face.

"Tell Mum and Dad that they've taken me to the Polizei, tell them not to worry, I'll soon be back," he said.

Kuleshov snarled something, shook his head and entered the porch with a gendarme to search the house. A German sergeant and the other soldier led Vanya along the narrow path trampled in the light snow beside the houses in that quiet little street. The sergeant and the soldier had to walk in the snow, so they ordered Vanya to go ahead and themselves followed close behind him.

Just as he was, in his overcoat and cap with earlaps, and his worn boots with the heels down, Vanya was pushed into a small dark cell, its walls rimmed with hoar-frost. The door was locked behind him and he remained alone.

The morning light barely penetrated the narrow slit under the ceiling. There was neither bench nor bed in the cell. A strong stench came from the close-stool in the corner.

Conjectures as to the reason for his arrest, whether they had learned about his activity or whether he had been picked up on suspicion; whether somebody had betrayed him, thoughts of Klava, of his parents, his comrades crowded his mind. But with an accustomed effort of the will, as though he told himself: "Keep calm, Vanya, only keep calm," he brought himself to the only possible conclusion: "I must wait and be patient, I'll know all in good time. . . ."

Vanya thrust his numbed hands into his coat pockets and leaned against the wall, his head in his cap, and with characteristic patience stood there for a long time—he himself did not know how long, perhaps for hours.

There was a continual coming and going of heavy footsteps along the corridor, cell doors banged. Voices sounded, distant and near. . . .

Then the footsteps of several men halted before his door, and a hoarse voice asked:

"In this one? . . . To Meister!"

Then the man who had spoken passed on, and a key grated in the lock.

Vanya moved away from the wall and turned his head. A German soldier entered carrying a key—probably the man on guard in the corridor. With him was a Polizei whose face was familiar to Vanya. He had learned to know and recognize all of them. The Polizei led him to Meister Brückner's room, where he saw a boy, one of those whom he had sent to sell cigarettes, guarded by another Polizei.

The lad, unwashed, hollow-eyed, glanced at Vanya, jerked up a shoulder, breathed hard through his nose and turned away.

Vanya felt somewhat relieved. But all the same, he would have to deny everything; even if he admitted that he had stolen the presents to make some money on them, they would demand that he betray his associates. No, it was no good cherishing any hopes of a favourable outcome. . . .

The German clerk came out of the Meister's office and stood to attention, holding the door open.

"Go in . . . go in . . ." said the Polizei hurriedly, with a scared look, pushing Vanya towards the door, while the other Polizei pushed the boy in the same direction, holding him by the scruff of the neck. Vanya and the boy entered the office almost side by side, and the door closed behind them. Vanya took off his cap.



There were several people in the office. Vanya recognized Meister Brückner, who was sitting on the other side of the table, leaning back in his chair, deep folds lining his thick neck over his uniform collar, and looking straight at him with round owl-like eyes.

"Come on nearer! Why this bashfulness all of a sudden?" said Solikovsky in a hoarse voice which sounded as though it had been dragged through a thicket. He was standing at one side of the table with a whip in his large hand.

The examiner Kuleshov, standing at the other side, reached out a long arm, seized the lad by the arm and jerked him to the table.

"That's him?" he asked with quiet mockery, winking towards Vanya.

"That's him . . ." the boy could barely get the words out. He breathed hard through his nose and stood motionless.

Kuleshov, pleased, looked at Meister and then at Solikovsky. The interpreter, on the further side of the table, leaning humbly over Meister, explained what was being said. Vanya recognized in the interpreter Shurka Reiband, whom he knew well, as he said everybody in Krasnodon.

"You understand?" And Solikovsky looked at Vanya, screwing up his narrow eyes which were sunk so deep behind his high cheekbones that they seemed to be peering over hilltops. "Tell Herr Meister who were your associates. Quick!"

"I don't know what you're talking about," said Vanya in his deep bass, looking straight at him.

"You see, eh?" Solikovsky said to Kuleshov, in surprise and anger. "That's the training Soviet power's given them!"

At Zemnukhov's words the boy looked at him in fright, and shivered as though he suddenly felt cold.

"Aren't you ashamed of yourself? You should think of the boy, after all he's suffering because of you," said Kuleshov in quiet reproach. "Look, what's that lying there?"

Vanya followed Kuleshov's glance. Beside the wall lay an open sack of presents, part of which had spilled out onto the floor.

"I don't know what that can have to do with me. I've never seen the boy before," said Vanya, his calm increasing with every moment.

Evidently Meister Brückner, to whom Shurka Reiband had been translating everything, was tired of this, and glancing at the matter, muttered something. Kuleshov respectfully ceased speaking, and Solikovsky stood to attention, his thumbs to his trouser seams.

"Herr Meister orders you to tell him how many times you have attacked lorries, with what object, who were your associates, and what else you have done—everything, tell everything . . ." said Shurka Reiband, coldly looking past Vanya.

"How can I attack lorries, when I can't even see you standing there, as you know very well!" said Vanya.

"Be so good as to reply to Herr Meister. . . ."

But everything was evidently clear to Herr Meister, and with a slight movement of his fingers, he said:

"Away with him to Fenbong!"

In a second the scene had changed. Solikovsky's huge hand seized Vanya by the collar, and shaking him viciously, he dragged him into the outer room, turned him about and lashed him ferociously across the face twice with his whip. Two crimson stripes appeared on Vanya's face. One blow caught the corner of his left eye, which at once began to swell. The Polizei who had brought him also seized him by the collar, and pushing him and jolting him forward with their knees, the two of them dragged him along the corridor.

Unteroffizier Fenbong and two SS. soldiers were sitting in the room into which Vanya was thrown, smoking and looking bored.

"If you don't give your gang away at once, you bastard . . ." hissed Solikovsky in a menacing voice, and his huge hand with its long iron talons seized Vanya by the face.

The soldiers finished their cigarettes and stamped out the butts. With practised, unhurried movements, they tore off Vanya's coat, stripped him of his other clothing and flung him, face downwards, naked, on the blood-stained pallet.

With the same lack of haste Fenbong's huge hand, bristling with light hairs, selected from the table two lashes of plaited electric wire, handed one to Solikovsky and kept the other himself, first testing it by making it whistle through the air. And then both of them, in turn, began lashing Vanya's bare body, drawing the wires towards them, while the soldiers held his legs and head. With the very first blows, blood began streaming from Vanya's body.

As soon as they began flogging him, Vanya swore to himself that he would never again open his mouth to answer a question, and that he would never let out a single groan. He kept silent all the time they were flogging him. From time to time they would pause, and Solikovsky would ask him:

"Have you come to your senses?"

Vanya lay in silence, without raising his head, and they commenced flogging him afresh.

About a half hour earlier Moshkov had been lying on that same pallet. Like Vanya, he had denied any part in the disappearance of the presents.

Stakhovich, who lived far away, on the outskirts, was arrested later than the other two.

Like all young men of his type, the main-spring of whose lives is conceit, Stakhovich could be more or less staunch, could even achieve hysterically heroic deeds under the eyes of others, especially of people close to him or of people of notable moral prestige. But face to face with danger or difficulty alone, he was a coward.

He lost his head the instant he was arrested. But he had that elastic mentality which instantly finds tens and hundreds of moral justifications which can make things easier for him.

When he was confronted with the boy, Stakhovich immediately realized that the New-Year presents were the only clue against him and his comrades, who were bound to be arrested. And instantly the thought flashed through his mind—to turn it all into a simple criminal matter, to make a clean breast of things, admit that the three of them had done it to-



gether, weep and talk of their terrible poverty and hunger and promise to redeem himself through honest labour. And he carried out this idea with such sincerity before Meister Brückner and others that they at once saw the kind of person they had to deal with. They began beating him right there in the office, demanding that he name other associates—the three of them had been at the club in the evening and couldn't have unloaded the lorry themselves!

Luckily for him, Meister Brückner and Wachtmeister Balder's dinner hour had come, and Stakhovich was left in peace until evening.

In the evening they talked to him kindly, promised that he would be released immediately if he named the persons who had taken the presents. Again he said that it was the three of them. Then he was handed over to Fenbong and tortured until he named Tyulenin. With regard to the others, he said that he had not been able to distinguish them in the darkness.

Unfortunately for himself, Stakhovich did not know that in betraying Tyulenin, he had brought upon himself still more and worse tortures, because the people into whose hands he had fallen knew perfectly well that just now, when he betrayed signs of weakness, was the time to break him finally and utterly.

They tortured him, poured water over him to bring him round when he fainted, and tortured him anew. And towards evening, a terrible wreck which had lost all semblance of human kind, Stakhovich broke down and talked: he had not deserved such punishment, he had only been a subordinate, there had been people who had given him his instructions, let them answer for it. And he betrayed the staff of the Young Guard. And the liaison girls.

The only one he did not name was Oulya Gromova—why, he did not know himself. But in the hundredth part of a second he saw her eyes looking at him and did not mention her.

On the 4th of January, Lyadskaya was brought from the Krasnodon settlement to the gendarmerie and confronted with Vyrikova. Each looked upon the other as the cause of her misfortune, and in front of the complacent Balder and the amused Kuleshov they began abusing each other like market women, betraying each other right and left.

"And don't forget that you were Pioneer leader!" cried Lyadskaya, so crimson with anger that even her freckles disappeared.

"And you—a fine turtle you are! All Pervomaisk knows who collected money for the Ossoaviakhim!"<sup>1</sup> screamed Vyrikova, clenching her fists and looking as though she wanted to stab her hated opponent with her sharp, little plaits.

They nearly came to blows. They were led away and detained for twenty-four hours. Then they were again brought to Wachtmeister Balder separately. Seizing Vyrikova's hand, and later Lyadskaya's Kuleshov whispered in the ear of each:

"Pretending innocence, eh? You'd better tell us who the members of the organization are!"

And Vyrikova, and later on Lyadskaya, weeping copiously and protesting that not only were they not members of the organization,

but had hated the Bolsheviks all their lives just as the Bolsheviks hated them, named all the Youth League members and all the most active of the young people who had remained in Pervomaisk and in Krasnodon settlement. They knew all about their schoolfellows and where they lived, knew who had been active in social work, knew the outlook of all, and each of them mentioned a couple of dozen names which coincided pretty accurately with the group connected with the Young Guard.

Rolling his eyes furiously, Wachtmeister Balder told each of them that he did not really believe in her innocence and in her not belonging to the organization and that he ought to subject her to terrible tortures with the criminals she had betrayed. . . . But he was sorry for her . . . and then there was a chance for her. . . .

Vyrikova and Lyadskaya were discharged from prison at the same time, each suspecting although not knowing for certain, that the other had not come out with clean hands either. They had been allotted a salary of twenty-three marks a month. They thrust out wooden hands in greeting to each other, just as though there had been no strife between them.

"Got off cheaply," said Vyrikova. "Come and see me sometime."

"Yes, cheap all right," said Lyadskaya. "I'll come around."

With that they parted.

For the first few days after the arrest of Zemnukhov and his comrades, Oulya did not sleep at home.

There was a strange regularity about the batches of arrests, each one of them immediately became known in Pervomaisk. First of all, parents of members of the staff who had left the town were arrested. The next were the parents of Arutyunyants, Safonov and Levashov, that is, the other lads who had gone.

On the 4th of January, Volodya Osmukhin was arrested at work in the machine shop.

Tolya "Rolling Thunder", who had refused to leave with Arutyunyants because of Volodya, learned about the arrests from Elizaveta Alexeyevna.

"What are you doing! You're killing yourself! You must leave at once!" cried Elizaveta Alexeyevna, her mother's heart torn with desperation.

"I'm not going," said Tolya quietly. "Why should I go?" and he waved his cap.

No, he could not go anywhere as long as Volodya was in prison.

The same day Tossya Mashchenko and another of the rank and file members of the Young Guard were arrested.

None of those remaining at liberty could guess that these fresh arrests, their ebb and flow, were connected with Stakhovich's terrible bursts of confession. After he had betrayed somebody, he would be left in peace for a time. Then they would begin to torture him again and again he would betray somebody else.

But as Oleg had foreseen, these arrests did not affect Pervomaisk and the Krasnodon settlement. And Oulya returned home.

Awakening in her own bed after spending so many nights with friends, Oulya got herself busy with the house. With furious ener-

<sup>1</sup> Ossoaviakhim—the Society for Air and Chemical Defense.



gy she washed the floors and prepared breakfast, hoping in this way to forget for a little while at least the heavy thoughts which had been her constant companions for the last days. Her mother, happy at seeing her daughter home again, even got up for the meal. The father was silent and grim. All the time when Oulya had slept away from home, only running in during the day for an hour or two to see her parents or to get something, Matvei Maximovich and Matrena Savelyevna had talked of nothing but the arrests in the town, avoiding each other's eyes.

Oulya tried to talk about casual things. Her mother made awkward efforts to support her, but it all sounded so forced that they both gave it up. Oulya did not even remember how she washed and dried the dishes and cleared the table.

Her father went to work.

She stood at the window, her back to her mother, wearing the simple dark blue house frock with polka-dots which she was so fond of. Her heavy, wavy plaits hung freely down her back, to the strong, supple waist, and the clear bright sunlight streaming in through the melting ice on the window-pane, shone through the locks hanging over her temples.

Oulya stood by the window looking out at the steppe, and singing. It was the first time she had sung since the Germans had come. Her mother was sewing, half reclining on her bed. She was astonished to hear her daughter singing, and even laid down her mending. Oulya was singing in a deep, resonant voice:

"... You served not for long, but with honour,

To the glory of your own native land. . ."

Matrena Savelyevna had never heard these words. There was something at once serious and sorrowful in her daughter's song.

"Avengers arise stern and threat'ning,

And stronger than ours their hand. . ."

Oulya broke off her singing and stood there in silence, looking out through the window at the steppe.

"What's that you were singing?" her mother asked.

"Oh, just something I remembered," said Oulya without turning.

Just then the door opened, and Oulya's elder sister burst into the room. She was plumper than Oulya, fair-haired and rosy-cheeked taking after her father, but now she was worried and distraught.

"The gendarmes are at the Popovs'," she said in a choked whisper, as though they could hear her there at the Popovs'.

Oulya turned.

"Is that so? We must stay away from them," she said calmly, without any change of countenance, and going to the door, unhurriedly put on her coat and drew a shawl over her head. But the same instant she heard the sound of heavy boots on the porch, and leaning back slightly against the flowered curtain which hung over the warm clothing, she turned her head to face the door.

And that was how she remained for ever imprinted in her mother's memory: leaning against the flowered curtain, her fine profile standing out against it; with vibrating nostrils and long lashes half lowered over her eyes, as though to conceal their fire, and the white

shawl which she had not yet fastened hanging over her shoulders.

Polizei chief Solikovsky and Unteroffizier Fenbong entered the room, accompanied by a soldier carrying a rifle.

"Here's the real bird, her very self," said Solikovsky. "Too late to give us the slip. . . What a shame!" he continued, his glance taking in her slender figure in the overcoat and the hanging shawl.

"Kind people. . ." the mother wailed, trying to rise from the bed. Oulya's eyes suddenly flashed at her angrily, she fell back and said no more. Her chin was trembling.

The search began. Oulya's father came up to the door, but the soldier would not allow him to enter.

At the same time investigator Kuleshov was carrying out a search at Anatoli's house.

Anatoli was standing in the middle of the room, his coat hanging open, hatless, while a German soldier held his arms from behind. A Polizei came up to Tatyana Prokofyevna and shouted:

"Give me a rope, I tell you!"

But Tatyana Prokofyevna, tall and crimson with rage, shouted back:

"You crazy loon, me giving you a rope to tie up my own son. . . Reptiles, that's what you are, reptiles!"

"Give him a rope, Mum, it'll stop him squealing," said Anatoli, his nostrils dilating. "They're six after all, how can they take one along without tying him up!"

Tatyana Prokofyevna burst into tears, went out onto the porch and threw a rope down at her son's feet.

Oulya was taken into that same large cell where Aunt Marina and her little boy were confined together with Maria Andreyevna Borts, Tyulenin's sister Fenya, and Anya Sopova, a Young Guard from Stakhovich's group of five, a fair, full-bosomed girl who had been beaten so badly that she could hardly lie down. The cell was cleared of all other arrested women and girls, and during the day it became filled with girls from Pervomaisk, including Maya Peglivanova, Sasha Bondareva, Shura Dubrovina, the Ivanikhin sisters Lilya and Tossya, and others.

There were neither beds nor pallets, so the women and girls settled down on the floor. The room was so full that the walls and ceiling oozed moisture.

The neighbouring cell, equally large, appeared to have been set aside for the boys—prisoners were being brought there all the time. Oulya began tapping: "Who's in there?" and received an answer: "Who's asking?" Oulya gave her name. Anatoli replied. In the next cell were the majority of the lads from Pervomaisk—Victor Petrov, Boris Glovan, Ragozin, Zhenya Shepelov, Sasha Bondareva's brother, Vassya—they had been arrested together. Since the damage was already done, the girls felt a certain comfort in knowing that the Pervomaisk boys were so close to them.

"I'm terribly afraid of torture," frankly admitted Tossya Ivanikhina, of the large childish features and long legs. "Of course, I'll die before I say anything, only I'm terribly frightened. . ."

"You mustn't be frightened; the Red



Army's quite close now, and maybe we'll manage to escape," said Sasha Bondareva.

"Girls, you haven't an idea of dialectics..." Maya began, and heavy as their hearts were, all burst out laughing. Such a word to be uttered in prison! "Of course, every pain can be endured," Maya said, not in the least put out.

Towards evening the prison became quieter. A dim electric light bulb enmeshed in wire burned high up under the ceiling, leaving the corners dark. Sometimes they could hear distant shouting in German and somebody would run past the cell. Sometimes several sets of footsteps would stump along the corridor, and there would be the rattle of arms. Once all of them started up as they heard a terrible, inhuman scream—it was a man's voice and this seemed especially terrible.

Oulya tapped on the wall to the boys:

"Is that from your cell?"

Back came the reply:

"No."

But the girls themselves could hear when somebody was taken from the neighbouring cell, and the next moment rapping was heard:

"Oulya... Oulya..."

She replied.

"Victor speaking... They've taken Anatoli..."

Oulya had a sudden picture of Anatoli's face, his serious eyes which could sometimes shine as though shedding their glow upon one, and she shuddered, as she thought of what awaited him. But at that moment a key rattled in the lock, the door of their cell opened and an insolent voice called out:

"Gromova..."

Here is what remained in Oulya's memory. For a while she stood in the ante-room of Solikovsky's office. Somebody was being beaten in the inner room. Solikovsky's wife, a woman with pale red tow-like hair, a bag in her hand, was sitting on a divan yawning as she waited for her husband. Beside her sat a little girl with the same tow-like hair and sleepy eyes, eating doughnuts. The door opened, and Vanya Zemnukhov, his face swollen beyond recognition, was led out. He almost bumped into Oulya, and with difficulty she stifled a scream.

Then she found herself standing with Solikovsky in front of Meister Brückner, and the latter was putting a question to her, a question he had probably asked many times already. Shurka Reiband, with whom she had danced at the club before the war, and who had tried to pay her a good deal of attention, translated the question looking as though she were an utter stranger to him. But she did not even listen to what he was saying. When she had still been at liberty, she had prepared what she was going to say in the event of her being arrested. With icy face and voice she announced:

"I shall not answer any questions, because I do not recognize your right to try me. You want more victims, and I have prepared myself to be one of them. Try your worst, you won't hear another word from me..."

Meister Brückner, who had evidently become used to hearing such declarations, evinced no anger, but with a slight movement of his fingers said:

"Away with her to Fenbong..."

The worst thing by far was not the pain caused by the torture—that she could endure, she did not even remember how they beat her. The terrible thing was when they rushed to undress her, and in order not to have them touch her, she was forced to divert herself of her clothes in front of them...

When they led Oulya back to the cell, she was met by the figure of Anatoli Popov being carried along, his fair head hanging so that she saw it upside down, with blood trickling from the corners of the mouth, his arms almost trailing the floor.

Nevertheless, Oulya remembered that she must keep up a face when she entered the cell, and it may be that she succeeded. She came into the room, and the Polizei who accompanied her shouted:

"Ivanikhina, Antonina!..."

In the doorway Oulya passed Tossya, who looked at her with horror-filled eyes, then the door closed behind her. But at that moment a piercing childish scream rang through the prison, not from Tossya, but uttered by a little girl.

"They've taken my little one..." screamed Maria Andreyevna, flinging herself against the door like a tigress and hammering at it, shouting: "Lucy... They've taken you, my little one! Let me out... Let me out!..."

Marina's little son woke up and began to cry.

Lyuba had passed these days in Voroshilovgrad, Kamensk, Rovenky, and once she had even got as far as Millerovo. Her circle of acquaintances among the enemy officers had widened considerably. Her pockets were stuffed with biscuits, sweets and chocolates which she got from them and which she simply gave to the first people she came across.

With desperate daring and unconcern she balanced on the very edge of a precipice, with a childlike smile and narrowed blue eyes in which there was sometimes a steely glint.

Oleg had asked her to arrange a personal meeting with Ivan Fyodorovich on this trip to Voroshilovgrad so that Ivan Fyodorovich should know that the Young Guard was prepared at any moment for an armed attack, and in order to arrange for contact with the district centre on the decisive days when the front approached the Donbas. But Ivan Fyodorovich was no longer in Voroshilovgrad. The man with whom Lyuba had contact told her that the Germans were raging in the town, and that Ivan Fyodorovich had left for a village.

This man himself rarely slept twice in the same place. He was unwashed, unshaven, his eyes red with lack of sleep, but excited to the highest pitch by the news from the front. He needed information about the German reserves at hand, about supplies, about various units—endless reports.

Lyuba again had to renew her acquaintanceship with that commissary colonel, and there was a time when she felt that her chances of wriggling out were very thin. The commissary, headed by the colonel with the unhealthy colour and flabby cheeks, was leaving Voroshilovgrad and leaving in haste. For this reason both the colonel himself,



who became more brittle the more he drank, and the other officers, were in a desperate mood.

Lyuba succeeded in wriggling out only because there were so many of them. They hindered one another and quarrelled, and in the end she found herself back again in the apartment where the little "mushroom girl" lived. Lyuba even brought with her a jar of excellent jam given to her by a lieutenant who was still hoping for something.

Lyuba undressed and got into bed in the cold room with its high ceiling. At that moment there was a thundering at the door. Lyuba raised her head. In the next room the girl and her mother awakened. The banging at the door increased in force, as though somebody wanted to beat it in. Lyuba jumped up from under the blankets—she was sleeping in part of her underclothes because of the cold—thrust her feet into her slippers and slipped on her dress. It was quite dark in the room. At the door, the mistress of the flat was asking in scared tones who was there. A rough voice answered that it was Germans. Lyuba thought that this was a drunken officer who had come to her, and felt a rush of panic.

Before she had time to collect herself, three men, with heavy, thick-soled boots, stamped into the room. One of them shone an electric torch onto her.

"Licht," shouted a voice, and Lyuba recognized that of the lieutenant.

Yes, it was he, with two gendarmes. The lieutenant's face was distorted with rage, when he looked at Lyuba, holding over his head the small lamp given him by the mistress. He handed the lamp to a gendarme and struck her in the face with all his force. Then he scattered all the small toilet articles lying on the chair by the head of the bed, as though searching for something. The mouth organ under a handkerchief fell to the floor, and the lieutenant angrily ground it to pieces beneath his heel.

The gendarmes searched the apartment, but the lieutenant went away, and Lyuba realized that it was not he who had brought them, they had simply found her through him. Something, somewhere had come to light, but what, she had no idea.

The lady who occupied the flat and her daughter dressed, and shivering with cold, watched the search. Or rather, the lady watched, while the little girl's eyes were fixed on Lyuba with burning interest and curiosity. At the last moment Lyuba hugged the little girl and kissed her firm cheek.

She was taken to the Voroshilovgrad gendarmerie where an official examined her papers and through an interpreter asked her if she was really Lyubov Shevtsova and in which town she lived. There was a lad sitting in a corner during the interrogation, but Lyuba could not see his face. He shuddered continually. Her suitcase was taken from her together with all her things, except some small articles, the jar of jam and a large brightly-coloured shawl which she sometimes wore round her neck, and now asked for, in order to wrap up the few articles which had been left over.

That was how Lyuba appeared, on the day

of interrogation, in the Pervomaisk girls' cell—in her bright *crêpe-de-chine* frock, carrying her bundle with various toilet accessories and the jar of jam.

A Polizei opened the cell door, and pushed her in, saying:

"Here's a Voroshilovgrad actress for you."

Her cheeks rosy from the frost, Lyuba looked round the cell with narrowed, sparkling eyes. She saw Oulya, Marina with the little boy, Sasha Bondareva, all her friends. Her fingers holding the bundle relaxed, the colour left her face and she became chalk-white.

At the time Lyuba was brought to the Krasnodon prison, it was so filled with Young Guards and their families and friends that adults and children were quartered in the corridor, and there was still the group from the Krasnodon settlement to come.

More and more arrests were made in the town, following on Stakhovich's intermittent confessions. Reduced to the condition of a tortured animal, Stakhovich bought himself respite by betraying his comrades; but each new betrayal brought him more and fresh torments. Once he recalled the whole story of Kovalyov and Pirozhok. Then he remembered that Tyulenin had a friend, he did not even know the name, but remembered his appearance and that he lived at "Shanghai". Suddenly he remembered that Tolya Orlov was Osmukhin's friend. Then the racked Volodya and courageous "Rolling Thunder" with his massive limbs were brought face to face in Wachtmeister Balder's private office.

"I've never seen him before," said Tolya softly.

"I don't know him at all," said Volodya.

Stakhovich recalled that Zemnukhov had a sweetheart in Nizhne-Alexandrovka. And a few days later Zemnukhov hardly recognizable, and Klava with her slight squint stood in front of Meister Brückner. And she said, barely audibly:

"No. . . We were at school together once. But I haven't seen him since the beginning of the war. I've been living in the country."

Zemnukhov was silent.

The entire group from the Krasnodon settlement was held in the local prison. When Lyadskaya betrayed the group, she did not know the place each one had in the organization, but Lida Androsova's diary had fallen into the hands of the Polizei, and it contained frequent mention of Kolya Sumskey, with whom she was in love. A very innocent diary, but it contained two criminal entries:

"December 20th, at eleven in the evening Dad came and told us to go out and listen to the roar of guns. Ma and I heard it—two salvoes in five minutes. How wonderful, but at the same time terrible. . . ."

"December 23rd and 24th. Wednesday, Thursday. Rumanians passing through continuously. Too numerous to count. On the 24th two Rumanians devoured all our bread. In the evening they left. During the night our planes bombed the place and dropped leaflets. . . ."

Lida Androsova, a pretty girl with a pointed chin, was flogged with rifle straps. They wanted to make her talk about Sumskey's



part in the organization. Lida counted the strokes aloud, but refused to utter a single word.

Even sadistic torturers can exhaust their powers in their hideous work. Not one of the arrested Young Guards admitted membership in the organization or betrayed a comrade. This unprecedented staunchness of nearly a hundred boys and girls, barely more than children, gradually singled them out from those who had had nothing to do with the organization, and from their families and friends. And in order to clear the ground, the Germans began to release all those who had been swept into the net by chance, and the parents who had been taken as hostages. Koshevoi's parents were released, Tyulenin's, Arutyunyants' and others. Maria Andreyevna was also released. Little Lucy had been freed the previous day, and it was only on returning home that Maria Andreyevna learned with tears that her maternal ear had not deceived her, her little girl really had been in prison.

From morning to night relatives of the prisoners crowded round the prison, seizing the hands of German soldiers and Polizei passing in and out of the prison, begging them for news, or to take in a letter or parcel. They were driven away, they assembled again, and collected passers-by and those who came to stare out of curiosity. The screams of people being tortured could sometimes be heard from the other side of the wall, and a gramophone was set going in the prison in order to drown the noise. The town was in a fever. There was not one inhabitant who was not at the prison during those days. And Meister Brückner was forced to give orders to accept parcels for the prisoners.

Unnatural as was the life led by these young people in the brutal conditions of this most brutal German occupation prison, they lived there for about a fortnight and gradually settled down to prison life, with its hideous cruelties inflicted on their bodies and minds, but with all the human relations of friendship and even some of their usual amusements.

"Girls, who wants some jam?" said Lyuba sitting down on the floor in the middle of the cell and opening her bundle. "The lout! Smashed my mouth organ. What'll I do without it?"

"Wait a bit, they'll play such a tune on your back that you'll lose all taste for your mouth organ," said Sasha Dubrovina emphatically.

"A lot you know about me! D'ye think I'll snivel or keep quiet when they beat me? I'll scream and abuse them. Like this: 'A-a-ah! You fools! What are you beating Lyuba for?'" she squealed.

The girls laughed.

"After all, girls, what have we got to complain about? Is it easier for other people? It's worse still for our families. They don't even know what's happening to us, poor things. And they've still got plenty before them!" said Lilya Ivanikhina.

This fair, round-faced girl had probably become accustomed to much when she had been in the concentration camp; she never complained about anything, looked after everybody, and was the live wire of the cell.

In the evening Lyuba was taken to Meister Brückner for interrogation. This was a very special interrogation, in the presence of all the gendarme and Polizei chiefs. Lyuba was not beaten, they were even insinuatingly gentle with her. Fully mistress of herself, but quite unaware how much they knew, Lyuba laughed and flirted with the Germans according to her usual habit, and pretended not to have the faintest idea what they wanted of her. They hinted that it would be a very good thing for her if she handed over to them the wireless transmitter, and the code at the same time.

This was only a guess on their part, they had no absolute proof, but they were pretty certain that their guess was correct. It was sufficient to know that Lyuba was a member of the organization in order to have a good idea as to the object of her trips to various towns and her close relations with the Germans. The German secret service had facts showing that there were several underground transmitters working in the region. And the lad who had been present during Lyuba's interrogation in Voroshilovgrad had been one of Boris Dubinsky's set, his friend at the courses, and confirmed that Lyuba too had studied at these secret courses. They told her to think it over, whether it would not be better for her to make a clean breast of it all, and sent her back to the cell.

Her mother sent her a parcel of food. Sitting on the floor and holding it steady between her knees, Lyuba brought out first sugar, then eggs, shook her head and sang:

"Lyuba, Lyubushka, Lyubushka-Golubushka,<sup>1</sup>

It's more than I can do to feed you. . . ."

To the Polizei who brought her the parcel, she said:

"Tell my mother that Lyuba's alive and well and ask her to bring plenty of 'borshch.'"<sup>2</sup> She turned to the girls and cried: "Come on girls, help yourselves!"

In the end Lyuba too came to Fenbong, who beat her mercilessly. And she kept her word: she screamed out abuse till it could be heard not only through the prison, but through all the empty lots:

"Lout! Baldpated fool! . . . Son-of-a-bitch! . . ." Those were the more polite epithets Lyuba showered on Fenbong.

Next time Fenbong flogged her in the presence of Brückner and Solikovsky, with a lash made of twisted electric wires. Lyuba was unable to hold back her tears, however much she bit her lips. She returned to the cell and lay down on her stomach in silence, hiding her head in her arms so that nobody should see her face.

Oulya, wearing the bright knitted jersey which had been sent her from home, and which went so well with her black eyes and hair, was sitting in a corner of the cell, her eyes shining mysteriously, telling the story of *The Secret of the Holy Magdalen Monastery* to a group of girls clustered round her. Every day she told them some interesting story in serial form. They had already heard *The Gadfly*, *The House of Ice* and *Queen Margot*.

<sup>1</sup> Golubushka—little dove, little darling.

<sup>2</sup> Beetroot soup, a Ukrainian national dish.



The door was open to air the cell and a Polizei, a Russian, who was sitting opposite it in the corridor on a stool, also listened to the *Secret of the Monastery*.

Lyuba rested for a little while, then sat up, listening absent-mindedly to Oulya's story, and saw Maya Peglivanova, who had been unable to rise for a day. Vyrikova had betrayed the fact that Maya had once been secretary of the Youth League group at school, and now they were torturing her more than the others. Lyuba looked at Maya, and an unquenchable thirst for vengeance rose in her, seeking an outlet.

"Sasha . . . Sasha . . ." she called softly to Bondareva, who was sitting in the group surrounding Oulya. "Our boys seem to have got very quiet. . . ."

"Yes. . . ."

"They haven't lost their spirits, eh?"

"Well, you know, they're being tortured even more than we," said Sasha with a sigh.

It was only in prison that something gentle and girlish had developed in Sasha Bondareva, with her sharp boyish voice and ways, and it was as though she was ashamed of its late appearance.

"Let's brace 'em up a bit!" said Lyuba, with a spurt of animation. "Let's draw a caricature of them!"

Lyuba swiftly took from under her pillow a piece of paper and a pencil blue at one end, and at the other. Then she and Sasha, lying on their stomachs with their heads together, began making up a rhyme. After that, giggling and snatching the pencil from one another, they drew a thin, haggard lad with a huge nose which dragged his head downwards until it was nearly trailing along the ground. They made the lad blue, his face they left white and used the red pencil for the nose and the title underneath:

"Hi, you fellows, lost your smile?  
Noses hanging half a mile?"

Oulya finished her story. The girls rose, stretched themselves and went to their own corners, some moving over to Lyuba and Sasha. The caricature was passed from hand to hand, and all the girls laughed.

"Hidden talent among us!"

"How shall we give it to them?"

Lyuba took the paper and went to the door.

"Davydov!" she called to the Polizei.

"Give our lads their portrait!"

"And how d'ye come to have pencil and paper? I'll report you, I'll tell them to make a search!" said the Polizei dourly.

Shurka Reiband, who was passing along the corridor, saw Lyuba standing in the doorway.

"Well, how about it, Lyuba! Coming to Woroshilovgrad with me soon?" he said, mockingly.

"Oh, no, not with you! But if you give our lads their portrait that I've made of them maybe I'll come."

Reiband looked at the caricature, a smile spread over his bony face and he pushed the sheet of paper into Davydov's hand.

"Give it to them, there's nothing in it," he said carelessly, and went on along the corridor.

Davydov, who knew that Reiband was close to the chief, and like all the Polizei tried to make up to him, silently opened the door of the boys' cell and threw in the paper. A burst of laughter came from inside. A few minutes later there was a rapping on the wall.

"You're all wrong there, girls. Our family's getting on well. . . . Vassya Bondarev speaking. Love to my sister. . . ."

Sasha took out from under her pillow the glass jar in which her mother brought her milk, ran to the wall and tapped:

"Vassya, can you hear me?"

Then she placed the bottom of the jar against the wall, and bringing her mouth close to it, began singing her brother's favourite song *Suliko*. But she had barely started when the words began bringing back so many memories of the past that her voice broke. Lilya came up to her, and stroking her hand, said in her quiet, kindly voice:

"Now, now, you mustn't. . . Pull yourself together. . . ."

"I hate myself when that salt water begins trickling," said Sasha, laughing.

"Stakhovich!" came Solikovsky's hoarse voice along the corridor.

"It's starting. . . ." said Oulya.

The policeman slammed and locked the door.

"Better not listen," said Lilya. "Oulya, you know my favourite poem, recite *The Demon*, as you did that time."

Oulya raised her hand, and began:

"What are the sorrows of which men complain,

What mortal's past or present care,  
To one short minute of my endless pain,  
Of my unrecognized despair?  
Oh! What is life, its misery, its grief,  
Its momentary acts of ill?

Is there not hope? Is there not the belief,  
Though judged, there may be pardon still?  
Not such is mine! My woe will never quit,  
Assuaged my grief shall never be.  
Alas! There never will be end to it,  
As never there will be to me!

It twines around—it makes my heart its own,  
A snake with which no force can cope,  
It ceaseless presses on my thought like stone,  
A sepulchre of shatter'd hope!"<sup>1</sup>

How these lines went to the hearts of the girls, just as though they said to them: "This is of you, of your still unborn suffering and dead hopes."

Oulya also recited the lines where the angel carries Tamara's spirit away.

"You see!" cried Tossya Ivanikhina. "The angel saved her after all. How splendid that is. . . ."

"No!" said Oulya, her eyes still filled with the same exalted light as when she had been reciting. "No! . . . I would have flown with the Demon. . . Just think, he revolted against God himself!"

"Well, what of that? Nobody'll ever be able to break our will," said Lyuba suddenly, her eyes blazing passionately. "Is there another people like ours anywhere in the world? People with such a noble heart! Who else could stand so much? . . . Maybe we'll die, I'm not afraid of that. No, I'm not a bit afraid," said Lyuba with a passion that made her whole

<sup>1</sup> Mikhail Lermontov, *Demon*.



body quiver. "But I don't want to. I want to get even with them, with those. . . Yes, and I want to sing, there are probably a lot of new songs now that we haven't heard yet. Just think of it, we've been living under the Germans for six months already, it is like sitting in a tomb, we have no songs, no laughter, nothing but blood and tears," said Lyuba.

"Oh, let's sing, to the devil with all of them," cried Sasha Bondareva, and waving her thin dark hand she began:

"Over the hills and dales,  
The division on the march. . ."

The girls gathered round and took up the song. It echoed through the prison and they heard the boys in the neighbouring cell join in.

The cell door crashed open and a policeman appeared, angry and alarmed.

"Have you gone crazy? Shut up!"

"The glory of these days'll

Never fade,

And live till all eternity,

When troops of partisans

Took city after city."

The policeman slammed the door to and hurried off. A little later heavy footsteps sounded in the corridor. Tall, sallow Meister Brückner stood in the doorway, dark bags under his eyes and heavy folds of his thick neck bulging out of his collar, his pudgy stomach looking as though it would burst his uniform. A smoking cigar was trembling in his hand.

"Platz nehmen! Ruhe!" he shouted with a deafening roar—as though a gun had suddenly gone off.

"Like twinkling beckoning rays  
The night that Spassk was taken  
The Volochaevsk days,"

sang the girls.

Gendarmes and police burst into the cell. There were sounds of fighting from next door. The girls sank to the floor by the walls.

Only Lyuba, left alone in the middle, her small hands pressed to her side, tap-danced straight to Brückner, her heels beating a tattoo on the ground, staring straight ahead with a fixed, hard gaze.

"Ach! Plague of a girl!" cried Brückner, out of breath. He seized Lyuba with his big hand, and dragged her out roughly, twisting her arms behind her.

Gritting her teeth, Lyuba bent her head and buried her teeth in the yellow wrinkled skin of his hand.

"Verdammt nochmal!" roared Brückner and began pummeling her over the head with his free fist. But she did not stop biting him.

After a struggle the soldiers dragged her away from him. Meister Brückner himself, brandishing his fists, helped them to drag her along the corridor.

The soldiers held her while Meister Brückner and Fenbong flogged her with electric wire on the fresh scars—Lyuba clenched her teeth and made no sound. Suddenly she heard the sound of engines somewhere high over the cell. She recognized the sound, and her heart filled with triumph.

"Ah! You sons-of-bitches! Ah! Goon, flog me! But that's our men up there!" she screamed.

The roar of a diving plane filled the room. Brückner and Fenbong ceased to torture her. Somebody switched off the light, while the soldiers released Lyuba.

"Ah! Cowards! Scoundrels! Your time has come, you rabble! Ah-a-a!" cried Lyuba, too weak to turn over on the bloodstained pallet and drumming on it with her feet.

The bursting bombs made the wooden building shake. The aeroplane was bombing the town.

That day was a turning point in the prison lives of the Young Guards: they no longer concealed their membership in the organization and declared open war on their torturers. They abused them, mocked them, sang revolutionary songs in the cells, shouted and danced when anybody was taken away to be tortured.

And the torture to which they were now subjected was something beyond all imagination, something outside the range of human thought or conscience.

Oleg, who out of all the group was best informed about the movements of the front, led them almost due north, in order to cross the frozen Donets somewhere near Gundorovskaya and reach the Voronezh-Rostov railway at Glubokiy.

They walked all night. Thoughts of their families and comrades filled their minds, and they said hardly anything all the way.

In the morning, skirting Gundorovskaya, they crossed the Donets without any great difficulty, and went towards the hamlet of Dubovaya, along the well-paved military highway, keeping a constant lookout for a house in the steppe where they could find food and warmth.

There was no wind, and when the sun rose it warmed them a little. The rolling steppe stretched before them, a pure white expanse of snow. The smooth surface of the road began to thaw, water gleamed in the ditches, the ground steamed and there was a smell of earth.

Every now and then they would see scattered remnants of German troops on the main road and on the dirt roads and cart tracks which could be seen for miles, especially from elevations in the ground. There were infantry, guns, transport and supply units which had escaped from the iron ring of the Stalin-grad encirclement and had been battered during subsequent battles on the Don and at Morozovsky. These were no Rumanians, the Germans themselves were retreating, but they were very different Germans from those who had advanced on thousands of lorries five and a half months previously. They were in dragged greatcoats, rags wrapped over their boots to keep their feet warm, unshaven, their faces and hands as black as though they had crawled through a chimney.

Once the young people saw a group of Italian soldiers cross the main road, following a cart track running westward. Most of them were unarmed, but a few carried their rifles over their shoulders like sticks, stock uppermost. An officer in a summer cloak,



with children's knickers wrapped round his head over his light cap, rode among his soldiers on a donkey, his huge boots nearly touching the ground. This man from a warm southern climate wandering about in the snows of Russia was so ludicrous, and so symbolic, with his nose running and freezing in his upper lip, that the young people looked at each other and burst out laughing. Civilians whom the war had torn from their homes were fairly frequent. Nobody paid any attention to two lads and three girls talking along the wintry road with bundles on their backs.

Everything combined to raise their spirits. With the headiness of youth, which has no real conception of danger, they already visualized themselves on the other side of the front.

Nina, in her felt boots and warm cap with flaps from beneath which the heavy waves of hair fell onto the collar of her warm coat, was rosy from the cold. Oleg kept looking at her. And when their eyes met, they smiled at each other. Seryozha and Valya once again began a snowball fight, and pursuing each other, left their comrades far behind. Olya, the oldest of them all, in dark clothes, calm and silent, was like a benevolent mother to the two couples.

They rested for a day or two in the village of Dubovoi, gradually getting news of the situation at the front. A disabled man, who had lost an arm—probably one of those cut off in the autumn—advised them to go further north, to the village of Dyachkino.

They wandered for several days among the disturbed German rear units and the inhabitants hiding in cellars. They were very close to the front line; the roar of guns was continuous, and at night they could see the flashes from the muzzles. Aircraft were bombing the German rear, and the front was evidently creaking under the pressure of the Soviet troops—all the Germans were making their way westward.

The soldiers looked askance at them, and the villagers were afraid to give them shelter, not knowing who and what they were. It was not only dangerous to try to cross the front, all five together, it was even risky to remain where they were. In one hamlet, a housewife, whose looks were distinctly friendly, suddenly rose in the night, dressed herself warmly and went out. Oleg, who was not asleep, awakened his comrades, and they left the hamlet and took to the steppe. The wind had risen, and seemed to go right through their sleep-heavy bodies. Shelter there is none. Never before had they felt so alone and helpless. And then Olya, the oldest, said that was in her mind.

"Don't be offended at what I'm going to say . . ." she began, without looking at anybody, and holding her arm against her cheek to keep the wind off. "We are too many to cross the front. And it may be very difficult for women or girls to get across at all. . . ." She looked at Oleg and Seryozha, expecting consent, but they said nothing—she was so obviously right. "We girls must free ourselves," she continued firmly. Nina and Valya understood that Olya was referring to them. Maybe Nina won't agree, but your mother

put you in my charge. We'll go to Fokino village, I've got a friend living there, a girl I knew in the Institute, we'll wait with her till the front reaches us."

At first Oleg could find no reply. Seryozha and Valya were also silent.

"Why should I object? No, I haven't any objections," said Nina, almost crying.

The five of them stood there in silence, depressed, unable to take the final step. Then Oleg said:

"Olya's right. Why should we expose the girls to such a risk when there's a simpler way out. And it's true, it'll be easier for us. You g-g-go," he ended, suddenly stammering, and put his arms round Olya and kissed her.

Then he went up to Nina, and the others turned away. Nina embraced him and began covering his face with kisses. He put his arms round her and kissed her on the lips.

"D-do you remember how I once begged and begged you to let me kiss your cheek, r-remember how I said: 'Only on the cheek, just on the cheek. . . ' And it had to be an occasion like this when we kiss. You r-remember?" he whispered, his face glowing with childlike happiness.

"I remember, I remember everything, I remember more than you think. . . I'll always remember you. I'll wait for you," she whispered.

He kissed her again and released her.

As they went away, Olya and Nina kept calling back to them, but then suddenly they could neither see nor hear them, there was only the crunching of the snowcrust underfoot.

"How about you?" Oleg asked Valya and Seryozha.

"We're going to try together, all the same," said Seryozha apologetically. "We'll go along the front nearer to Gluboki, maybe we'll manage to slip through. And you?"

"I'll try here, I think. At least I know the district," said Oleg.

There was another minute of heavy silence.

"Dear pal, don't be ashamed, don't get downhearted. . . Well?" said Oleg, understanding all that was seething inside Seryozha.

Valya embraced Oleg tempestuously. But Seryozha, who did not like demonstrations of affection, shook his hand, clapped him on the shoulder and then turned and walked off without looking back. Valya overtook him.

That was on the seventh of January.

But they found that for the two of them to cross the front was also impossible. They wandered from village to village and at last came to Kamensk. They pretended to be a brother and sister who had lost their family in the battle areas on the Middle Don. And people pitied them and made them beds on the cold earthen floor where they slept in each other's arms, like a brother and sister overtaken by misfortune. In the morning they again rose and wandered on. Valya wanted to try crossing the front anywhere, but Seryozha was of a practical turn of mind and always found something against it.

At last Valya realized that Seryozha would not make any attempt at crossing as long as she was with him. Seryozha alone could cross anywhere, but he was afraid for her. Then she told him:

"If I'm alone I can fix myself up somewhere



here, in a village, and wait till the front crosses our district. . . ."

But he would hear nothing of it.

Nevertheless, she was too clever for him. In all their activity, especially since they had begun doing everything together, he had always been the leader and she had followed him; but in personal matters she always had her way, and he did not even realize how she influenced him. She pointed out that he might get to a Red Army unit and tell them how their comrades were dying in Krasnodon, come back with that unit to save them, and rescue Valya at the same time.

"I'll wait for you somewhere roundabout here," she said.

Tired after a long day, Valya slept soundly, and when she awakened, Seryozha was gone. He had not wanted to waken her in order to say goodbye.

Valya was alone.

As long as she lives, Elena Nikolayevna will never forget that frosty night, the night of January 11th. The family was asleep when somebody tapped softly on the window. Elena Nikolayevna heard the sound immediately, and knew at once that it was he.

Oleg sank down onto a chair, his cheeks frozen, too tired even to take off his cap. All awakened. Grandmother lighted the paraffin lamp and put it under the table so that no light could be seen from the street. The police were in the habit of visiting them several times a day. Oleg sat there, drooping, his cap, covered with hoar frost about his face, dark patches on his cheekbones. He was very thin.

He had made several attempts to cross the front, but he knew nothing of the present firing system and the positions of the defending units and groups. He was too tall, too noticeable in his dark clothing, to be able to slip across unnoticed over the snow. In addition, he was continually tormented by the thought of his comrades left behind in the town. In the end he convinced himself that now, when so much time had passed, he could return unnoticed.

"What do you know of Zemnukhov?" he asked.

"Everything's still the same," said his mother, avoiding his eye.

She took off his cap and coat. There was nowhere even to make him any hot tea, but even so his family kept exchanging glances, fearing that at any moment he might be dragged away.

"How about Oulya?" he asked.

Nobody spoke.

"Oulya's been taken," said his mother softly.

"And Lyuba?"

"Lyuba, too. . . ."

His face changed, then after a moment's silence, he asked:

"And in the Krasnodon settlement?"

In order not to drag out the agony, Uncle Kolya said:

"It would be quicker to tell you who's not been taken. . . ."

Oleg dropped his head and asked no more questions.

After some discussion, they decided to send him to Marina's relatives in the village, that

very night. Uncle Kolya was to take him there.

They walked along the Rovenki road across the deserted steppe, which was visible for a long distance beneath the star-filled sky, bathed in the bluish light of the moon.

Although he had hardly rested a moment after so many days' wandering, often without food or a roof over his head, and despite all that he had heard at home, Oleg was fully master of himself and as they walked along, asked Uncle Kolya all the details of the disaster, which had overtaken the Young Guard, and told his own adventures.

They did not notice when they came to the end of a long rise. They crossed the crest and began descending a steep hill about fifty yards from a large village looming dark in front of them.

"In the village we may come up against them, better go round," said Uncle Kolya.

They turned aside from the road and bypassed the village about fifty yards to the left—the snow was deep only where it had drifted.

They were just crossing one of the side roads leading to the village when several grey figures dashed out from behind the last house, cutting them off. As they ran, they shouted hoarsely in German.

Without a word, Uncle Kolya and Oleg raced away from them down the road.

Oleg felt that he could not run far, his strength was at an end, and he could hear them overtaking him. He gathered his last ounce of strength, then slipped and fell. They dashed up to him and twisted his arms behind him. Two others continued the pursuit of Uncle Kolya and fired several revolver shots after him. Some time later they returned, laughing at their failure to catch him.

Oleg was led into a large house which probably had been the village Soviet but was now the elder's office. Several gendarmes were asleep on the straw spread over the floor. Oleg saw that he had stumbled on a gendarme post. A field telephone covered with dark leather stood on the table.

The corporal turned up the lamp, and began interrogating Oleg, shouting at him angrily. Finding nothing suspicious, he pulled off his coat and went over it inch by inch with his thick, splay fingers, skillfully and methodically.

Those fingers at last came to the Youth League card, and Oleg knew that this was the end.

Covering the card and the forms for temporary cards with his hand, the corporal began shouting into the telephone, his voice cracking. Then he put down the receiver and said something to the soldiers who had brought Oleg in.

It was only the next evening that Oleg, accompanied by the corporal, with a soldier taking the place of the driver, drove up on sledge to the gendarme building in Rovenki and was handed over to the gendarme chief.

Oleg sat alone in a cell, in absolute darkness, hugging his knees with his arms. If his face had been visible, it would have been found to be calm and stern. Thoughts of Nina, of his mother, of how idiotically he had been caught—he had had plenty of time for those while he had been at the elder's office and on the way



and all that was already far from him. He did not wonder what was awaiting him, because he knew. He was calm and stern, because he was drawing up a balance sheet of the whole of his short life.

"Even if I am only sixteen, it's not my fault that my life's been so short. . . What is there that can frighten me? Death? Torture? I shall be able to stand it. . . Of course I'd have liked to die so that people should remember me, but I can die unknown. . . After all, that's the way millions of people like myself are dying, in all their strength and love of life. What can I hold against myself? I haven't lied, I haven't sought the easy way. I've sometimes been foolish—perhaps I've been weak, too easy-going. . . That's not such a great crime at sixteen. . . I haven't even tasted all the happiness that was offered me. But all the same I'm happy! I'm happy because I haven't wriggled like a worm. . . I've fought. . . Mummie always called me her eaglet. I won't let her down, or my comrades either. I'll make my death as clean as my life—I'm not ashamed to say it to myself. . . You'll die worthily, Oleg."

His face cleared, he lay down on the slimy frozen floor, put his head on his cap and fell fast asleep.

He opened his eyes with the consciousness that somebody was standing over him. It was morning.

In front of Oleg, near the almost closed door, stood a stout old man in a Cossack coat with a Polish cap which barely retained its place on his large head, he had a face covered with reddish freckles, a large bluish nose and frantic watery eyes.

Oleg sat up on the floor, looking at him in amazement.

"And I wondered what this Koshevoi is like? . . That's all he is! . . You dirty pup! You scum! . . I'm sorry for you, I am, going over to the Gestapo! You would have been better with me. I flog only in special cases. . . So what's what you're like! You're as well known as Dubrovsky.<sup>1</sup> You've read Pushkin, eh? Oh, you viper! A pity I shan't be dealing with you." The old man bent over Oleg, screwed up one mad watery eye and puffing vodka into the lad's face, whispered mysteriously: "You're wondering why I've come so early?" He winked very confidentially. "Today I'm sending a group that way. . ." He jerked his thumb in a general upward direction. "I come with the barber to shave 'em all, I always shave 'em first," he whispered. He straightened up, cleared his throat, raised a large index finger and said: "All in the very best style! . . But you're going the Gestapo way, I don't envy you. Au revoir!" He brought his old swollen hand to the peak of his cap and went out, and somebody slammed the door behind him.

When Oleg was brought into the common cell, where he found himself with strangers from distant parts, he learned that this had been Orlov, the chief of the Rovenki police, a

former officer in Denikin's White-Guards, a foul butcher and torturer.

Two or three hours later he was taken away for interrogation. Only Germans took part—even the interpreter was a German corporal.

There were a great many gendarme officers in the room where he was brought. All of them stared at him with unfeigned curiosity and surprise and some of them even had the look of men who are staring into the face of a very important person. With his still somewhat childlike grasp of life, Oleg could not conceive the extent of the fame achieved by the Young Guard, and how legendary a figure he himself had become thanks to Stakhovich's depositions and the fact that he had evaded arrest for so long. He was interrogated by a supple German who seemed as boneless as an eel; under his eyes there were hideous, violet semi-circles peering out from beneath almost black lids, he had rounded cheekbones and corpse-like patches on his thin cheeks, which gave him a spectral appearance—a figure such as one sees in nightmares.

In answer to the demand that he make a clean breast of all the activities of the Young Guard and name its members and associates, Oleg replied:

"I alone led the Young Guard, and I alone am responsible for what was done by its members acting on my orders. . . I could tell you about the Young Guard if I were being tried in open court. But it would be of no benefit to the organization to speak of its activities to those who are killing innocent people. . ." He paused for a moment, his calm gaze travelling over the officers. . . "and who themselves are really already dead."

The German who really was like a corpse nevertheless put some more questions to him.

"That is all I have to say," said Oleg, and lowered his lashes.

After that, Oleg was thrown into the Gestapo prison, and for him too there began that terrible life the very thought of which sears the mind of every decent person: how much worse to have to endure it.

But Oleg endured this life to the end of the month, and they did not kill him, because they were expecting Major-General Kler, the district Feldkommendant, who wished personally to interrogate the leaders of the organization and to decide their fate.

From three points, like the angles of a triangle, light machine guns were covering the hollow between the hills which looked like a camel's saddle, the bullets splashing in the wet mixture of snow and mud or ricocheting with a whine. But Seryozha was already on the far side of the saddle. Strong hands clutched his wrists and dragged him into a trench.

"Aren't you ashamed of yourself?" exclaimed a stocky sergeant with his big eyes and a strong Kursk accent. "What's all this here? A Russian and look at you!"

"I'm one of ours, one of ours," said Seryozha laughing nervously. "I've got my papers sewn into the lining of my jacket. Take me to the commander. I've got important information."

The divisional chief of staff and Seryozha stood before the commander in the only cot-

<sup>1</sup>The hero of a novel by Alexander Pushkin, a young officer who became the leader of a band of outlaws, robbing the rich landowners and helping the serfs.



tage left standing in the hamlet. Once it had been surrounded by flowering acacias. But they had all been destroyed by artillery and aircraft. This was the division's headquarters, fighting units never passed that way and lorries were forbidden to drive through. Everything was very quiet in the hamlet and in the cottage, apart from the continual roar of battle coming from beyond the hills.

"I don't judge only by his papers, but by what he says as well. The boy knows everything—the district, the gun positions of the heavy artillery even in squares twenty-seven, twenty-eight, seventeen . . ." and the chief of staff named some more figures. "A great deal fits in with the reports of scouts, and some points he's filled in. By the way, the banks are fortified. Remember?" added the chief, a curly-headed young man with three pips on his epaulettes, every now and then frowning and twisting his mouth—he had a bad toothache.

The divisional commander glanced very casually at Seryozha's Youth League card and the hand-written certificate on a crudely-printed form, signed by Commander Turkenich and Commissar Kashuk, to the effect that Sergei Tyulenin was a member of the staff of the Young Guard underground organization in the town of Krasnodon. After looking at the card and certificate he handed them back not to the chief of staff, who had given them to him, but to Seryozha, and looked the boy over from head to foot.

"So that's it," said the divisional commander.

The chief of staff, frowning with pain, drew in a breath through one corner of his mouth and said:

"He has important information which he refused to give to anybody but you."

Seryozha told them about the Young Guard and how the division most certainly ought to advance at once to rescue the young folks in prison. The chief of staff, after listening to a tactical plan of advance on Krasnodon, smiled, but immediately groaned softly and pressed his hand to his cheek. The commander, however, did not smile, evidently not considering a march of the division on Krasnodon such an impossible proceeding, or it might be that he was simply paying no attention to it.

"Do you know Kamensk?" he asked.

"I know the southern part and the surroundings on that side. I came from there. . . ."

"Fedorenko!" the commander shouted in a voice that made the dishes rattle.

Except for themselves the room was empty, but in an instant, as though he had sprung out of the clear sky, Fedorenko appeared before the commander clicking his heels so smartly that everybody felt more cheerful.

"Fedorenko reporting."

"First find the boy some boots, feed him and then put him to bed where it's warm, till I send for him."

"Get boots on him, feed him, let him sleep till you send for him!"

". . . in a warm place," and the commander raised his finger. . . "How about the bath?"

"It'll be ready, Commander General!"

"Dismiss!"

Seryozha and Sergeant Fedorenko, their arms about each other's shoulders, like old

friends, emerged from the cottage.

"Kolobok's<sup>1</sup> coming," said the commander with a smile.

"No—really?" said the chief of staff beaming, even forgetting his toothache for the moment.

"We'll have to get over into the dugout. Order it to be heated or you know what Kolobok'll have to say!" said the divisional commander with a grin.

At that time Kolobok, the subject of this conversation, was still asleep at his command point, which was not situated in a house or even in any inhabited place, but in a dugout in a grove. Although the army was advancing very rapidly, Kolobok held to the principle of constructing a dugout for himself and his staff at every fresh halt. He had adopted this principle after the death of many high-ranking officers, his comrades, from enemy aircraft in the first days of the war; they had not troubled to dig in.

Kolobok was not his real name. He had another name, a simple peasant name which he had from his father and grandfather, and which had become known throughout the country during the Stalingrad battle. Kolobok was a nickname which he himself never suspected. It harmonized very well with his appearance; he was short, broad-shouldered, deep-chested, and—why mince matters?—with a portly curve in front. His head was large, round, clean-shaven, and sat very firmly on his shoulders without any apparent need of a neck. He had calm, cheerful little eyes and very free and easy movements. But it was not his appearance that had inspired the nickname, which he had acquired when he had been commanding that same division where they were now expecting him. He and his division had dug in beneath the shattered houses of Stalingrad and remained there throughout the battle, until the enemy's furious attack had broken against stone-wall resistance. After that he had advanced, clinging to the heels of the enemy, first at the head of his division, then, of an army, taking tens of thousands of prisoners and hundreds of guns, overtaking enemy units, cutting them off, and leaving them behind for others to mop up, today with one foot still on the Volga and the other already on the Don, tomorrow with one on the Don and the other already on the Donets.

It was then that the soldiers fastened the nickname "Kolobok" on him. He certainly did roll along like the bun in the fairy tale.

And so the army commander slept, because he, like all good leaders, had prepared everything of importance concerning the higher command during the night, while other people whom these matters did not concern were sleeping, and he was free from the daily round of army life. But Senior Sergeant Mishin, tall as Peter the Great, who occupied the same place with regard to the army general as Sergeant Fedorenko did with the general commanding the division—Mishin was already looking at his captured German wrist-watch which had been presented to him—wasn't it time to wake the general?

<sup>1</sup> Kolobok—a small round bread, the subject of a Russian fairy tale.



Kolobok was never able to catch up with his sleep, and today he would have to rise earlier than usual. Two days previously he had rolled one of his divisions into the station of Glubokaya and occupied it, straddling the Voronezh-Rostov railway. But his famous division which he had commanded since the beginning of the war was marking time at Kamensk, unable to force the Northern Donets from the march. It was to undertake the operation the next night, occupy Kamensk and break through into the rear of the retreating Germans, who had taken up defense positions along the Donets—break through into their rear in order to ensure the success of those units advancing through Mityakinsky, Stachichno-Lugansky on Voroshilovgrad.

With a last glance at his watch, Senior Sergeant Mishin went to the shelf on which the general was sleeping. It actually was nothing but a shelf, because the general, who was afraid of damp, always made himself a bed like the upper berth of a sleeping car.

As usual, Mishin began by shaking the general vigorously, as he slept on his side, his face wearing the innocent expression of a healthy man with a clear conscience. But of course, this was not enough to pull him out of his sound sleep, it was only a preliminary operation. He then thrust one of his arms under the general's side, took him round with the other hand under the arm, and very gently, as though tending a child, lifted the general's heavy body from the bed.

The general was sleeping in his dressing gown. Before he was fully awake he slumped down in Mishin's arms, trying to rest his round head on his shoulder. But the Senior Sergeant ruthlessly dropped his legs to the floor and pulled him along to a stool on which he seated him. The general helped himself along the floor with his thick legs in their warm woollen socks, then he opened his eyes, and his body immediately took on its usual military bearing.

In the same instant the barber in his huge top-boots and snow-white jacket over his tunic appeared and stepped up to the general. He had already mixed his lather in the neighbouring dugout that served as a kitchen, and now he fixed a napkin round the neck of the general's dressing gown, with a feathery touch lathered the dark, stubborn bristles that had grown during the night. Meanwhile, Mishin was quickly putting on the general's slippers.

Before a quarter of an hour had passed, the general, fully dressed, his tunic buttoned, was sitting, solid and massive, at the table, and while breakfast was served, swiftly looked through the papers which the adjutant handed to him, expertly snatching them from the leather folder with its red lining.

"The devil take it, let them keep the sugar now they've got it. . . Recommend Safonov for the Red Banner instead of the For Valour medal; they seem to think in the division that a soldier can't have anything better than a medal, and that the Orders are only for officers! . . ."

"What, not shot him yet? It's not a tribunal, but the editorial office of *A Cordial Word*!"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A pre-revolutionary sentimental magazine for children.

Let them shoot him immediately, or I'll have them court-martialled themselves! . . . Ugh, not learned yet how to write a report: 'An invitation for substitution required. . . ' I've come from the ranks too, but I know well enough that that's no decent Russian. Tell Klepikov who signed this without looking at it to read it through, correct the mistakes in red or blue pencil and bring the paper to me himself. . . It's particularly bad stuff you've brought me today. It can wait, it can all wait," said the general and attacked his breakfast energetically.

He began by swallowing a full glass of vodka at one gulp without even batting an eyelash, cleared his throat and in a few minutes a tinge of colour came into his face. A stranger seeing the general toss off a glass of vodka before breakfast might have thought that he had a weakness for it. But the general had no particular craving for drink: dinners and suppers, banquets and parties he scorned as a waste of valuable time. He simply took that single glass every morning "to perk him up," as he said. "Peter the Great, a real Russian, rose at five every morning and started his working day with same."

The commander had finished his coffee when a stocky, well-built general appeared at the table with a folder in his hand: he had a high white forehead, receding reddish hair neatly clipped at the temples, his movements were quiet and precise—he looked more like a scientist than a soldier.

"Won't you sit down, please," the commander invited him.

The chief of staff had come on business of more importance than that which the adjutant had inflicted on the general. But before tackling the business on hand, the chief of staff, smiling, handed the general one of the latest Moscow newspapers, received by plane at front headquarters and sent round that morning to all army headquarters.

There was the usual list of decorations and promotions among officers and generals, including several in Kolobok's army.

With the lively interest of a military man, the commander swiftly read the list aloud, and as he came to the names of men he knew from the Academy or from the front, he would glance at his chief of staff meaningly, with surprise, dubiously, or simply gaily, especially when men of his army were mentioned.

Another decoration had been awarded the commander of the division which had previously been Kolobok's, and to which his chief of staff had also belonged. The action for which he had been decorated had happened a long time previously, but the recommendation had had to pass through many hands, and only now had the announcement appeared in the paper.

"A fine time to get it, when he's mucked up Kamensk!" said the commander, but the word he used was a stronger one than "mucked up".

"He'll make it good," said the chief of staff with a smile.

"Oh, I know, I know your weakness! . . . I'll be seeing him today and I'll congratulate him all right. . . Chuvyrin—a telegram of congratulations to him. Kharchenko the same. But Kukolyev—send him something

informal, you know what I mean, nothing dry, but a bit human. I'm glad, very glad about him. I hardly hoped he'd pull up again after Vyazma," said the commander. Then he suddenly smiled slyly. "When'll we be wearing epaulettes?"

"They're bringing them," said the chief of staff and smiled again.

This was only a short time after the Order had been issued about introducing epaulettes for soldiers, officers and generals, and interest in the army was running high.

It was sufficient for the divisional commander to tell his chief of staff about the expected arrival of Kolobok, for the news to fly through the whole division. It even reached those who were lying in a thick mixture of snow and mud on the open steppe side of the Donets, from whence they could see the steep right bank, the buildings of Kamensk, smouldering in many places, and the silhouettes of our Stormoviks bombing the town in the fog.

When the Commander-in-Chief was driving up to the second echelon of the division where the divisional commander met him, and later when they were walking to the headquarters, it was wonderful how many officers and soldiers, alone or in groups, managed to be about! Everybody wanted not only to see him, but to have him notice them. All clicked their heels and saluted smartly, and grinning from ear to ear followed him with that jolly, typically Russian, word: "Kolobok... Kolobok... Kolobok... Kolobok..."

"Own up, you only crawled into the dugout an hour ago, devil take you, the walls haven't sweated yet," said Kolobok immediately guessing the divisional commander's manoeuvre.

"Yes, two hours ago. We shan't leave it until Kamensk's taken," said the latter, standing submissively in front of his chief, with a twinkle in his eye and a calm, confident expression that seemed to say: "I'm in charge in my own division and I know well enough what you'll give me a serious wiggling for; but all this is nothing, a mere flea-bite."

The general congratulated him on his decoration, and the division commander, seizing a favourable moment, said with feigned awkwardness:

"Before we get down to business . . . there's a bath still standing in the village not far away, we'll heat it, you probably haven't had a chance for a bath for a long time either, Comrade General!"

"Inde-e-ed?" said the general, very seriously. "And is it ready?"

"Fedorenko!"

It appeared that the bath would be ready only in the evening. The divisional commander gave Fedorenko a look that said very plainly he'd hear more of this.

"In the evening. . . ." The Commander-in-Chief wondered whether he could not postpone one thing or change another, but suddenly remembered that something else had turned up on the way.

"I'll have to wait for another time," he said, and sighed like a babe.

On the advice of the Army Chief of Staff, who was generally considered an unassailable military authority, the divisional commander had worked out a plan for carrying Kamensk with a flanking movement to the north, and he

began to explain this plan to his chief. The latter listened, beginning to show signs of dissatisfaction.

"Here we have a triangle—the river, the railway and the outskirts of the town—all that's fortified. . . ."

"I expressed the same doubts, but Ivan Ivanovich correctly remarked. . . ."

Ivan Ivanovich was the Army Chief of Staff.

"You'll force it, and then you'll have nowhere to deploy along the front. They'll be pounding you all the time on the approaches," said the Commander-in-Chief, tactfully avoiding the question of Ivan Ivanovich.

But the divisional commander understood that his position was strengthened by the authority of Ivan Ivanovich, and he said again:

"Ivan Ivanovich said that they can't and won't wait for a blow from here, and scout reports confirm this."

"And what's more, as soon as you break into the town from here, they'll begin plastering you along the length of the streets from the station. . . ."

"Ivan Ivanovich. . . ."

The Commander-in-Chief realized that they would get no further until he had removed the hindrance of Ivan Ivanovich, and he said simply:

"Ivan Ivanovich was mistaken."

After that, gently enough, with sure, sweeping movements of his pudgy hands and their short fingers, illustrating everything on the map, he sketched a flanking plan of attack from the south.

The divisional commander recalled the boy who had crossed the front in the morning through the southern outskirts of the town. And suddenly the plan for storming the town from the south flashed into his head of itself.

At the time when Seryozha met it, the Red Army was the same as he remembered it from the days of the July retreat, and yet not the same. It was an army already conscious of being a victor, and every man in it, from soldier to the high command, knew what he had to do.

All the time, from the unsuccessful attack from the march up to the new attack, there was quiet work going on in the army, from top to bottom, from the command to the rank-and-file soldier—creative work, every-day work, political and organizational work, disposition of supplies, instruction and plain physical work.

By the night of the seventeenth, all the main points had been settled in the divisional headquarters and transmitted to the regiments. And the commanders visited that bath-house, which had remained to mark the site that had once been a village.

The first to bathe were the divisional commander and his political officer. Then came the chief of staff, the artillery commander, a colonel of the guards and a representative of the Air Force, who had been in the Spanish war and had been decorated three times. The adjutants came, the runners, the drivers and the staff cook Vassya.

At five in the morning, the divisional commander and his political officer went to the regiments to check up on their preparations.

Major Kononenko, Regimental Commander, had been given the task of forcing the



river and reaching the railway halt south of Kamensk in order to cut communications between that town and the south; the officers in his dugout had not slept all night but had devoted the time to issuing orders and explanations to commanders of all ranks, from the highest to the lowest, going into all the details of their own minute tasks in the action which, though small, were important and decisive.

Although all the instructions and explanations had already been given, the divisional commander methodically and with infinite patience, once more repeated what had been said the previous day and checked up on Major Kononenko's preparations.

Major Kononenko was a typical, hard-working young officer with a quiet voice and a thin, energetic, courageous face; he wore a sweater under his tunic, you could see the collar peeping out at the top and in place of a greatcoat, which would have hampered his movements, he wore ordinary quilted coat and breeches; he listened patiently but without paying any great attention because he knew it all already; he himself reported on what he had done.

This was the regiment in which Seryozha had landed. He had retraced the whole ladder from headquarters to company commander, received a tommy-gun and two grenades and was enrolled in the storm group which was to be the first to break into the halt south of Kamensk.

During the previous days, a warm snow-fall had been blowing around Kamensk over the open rolling country, with its rare copses. Then the south wind drove away the mist. The snow, not very deep, began to thaw and the fields and roads became soft and slushy. The villages and hamlets on either side of the Donets had been badly battered by aircraft and artillery. The men took cover in old dugouts and pillboxes, in tents or simply under the open sky, without lighting any fires.

During the day that preceded the attack they could see a fairly large town through the mist, lying on the far bank of the river. Its criss-cross streets were empty and they could plainly discern the station water-tower, the factory chimneys and the church bellfries rising above the roofs of the houses. The German firepoints on the outskirts of the town and on the hillocks before it, could be seen with the naked eye.

With mixed feelings the Soviet man in uniform looks at such a town before the battle for its liberation. A feeling of moral exaltation that he, the man in the soldier's greatcoat, was about to attack, to liberate what was his own. A feeling of pity for the town and the people living in it, for the mothers and the little children hiding in cellars and wet crannies. Rage against the enemy who, his experience had shown, resisted with double and triple fury arising from the consciousness of his crimes and the retribution awaiting him. An involuntary shrinking from the thought that the task was a hard one and death very near. And how many hearts chilled with a natural feeling of fear!

But not one of the men gave any sign of these feelings, all were excited and gay, and looked roughly.

"If Kolobok's got going, he'll roll in," said the men, as though it were not they themselves, but some magic kolobok of legend that was about to roll into the town.

It happened by one of those chances of war, that the storming party to which Seryozha was assigned was commanded by that same sergeant whom he had lighted upon after crossing the front—a short, agile, merry fellow with a face criss-crossed with tiny wrinkles and big blue eyes that sparkled until they seemed to be continually changing colour. His name was Kayutkin.

"So you're from Krasnodon?" the sergeant asked him again, with an expression of mingled gladness and incredulity.

"I've been there, why?" asked Seryozha. "I had a girl friend from there," said Kayutkin, rather sadly, "but she was evacuated. . . I passed through Kamensk," he continued after a short silence, "yes, and defended it too. All those who defended it are either dead or prisoners now, and here I am again. Have you ever heard the poem?" And he recited it seriously:

"In the attack not once was I wounded,  
Now just a scar to show the place.  
Thrice was I by enemy surrounded,  
Thrice, but I came out in any case.  
And though it wasn't easy, rather hard

I'd say,  
I'm still alive, you see, not dead,  
What with fire direct and fire aslant all day,  
With shells and bullets whizzing overhead,  
And not once while tramping martially  
Along the roads in the dust of marching feet  
Sometimes I was "dispersed" just partially,  
And sometimes I "suffered just defeat."

"That was written about someone like me," said Kayutkin, laughing and winking at Seryozha.

Thus the day passed and night fell, and while the divisional commander was repeating the assignment to Major Kononenko, the men who were to carry it out were asleep. Seryozha slept too.

At six in the morning they were wakened by the orderlies. The men drank a glass of vodka, ate half a pannikin of meat soup thick with cereal and a good helping of millet porridge. And through the thinning fog they began to trickle into their positions for the attack, making their way through gulleys and bushes.

A thick mixture of snow and slush was churned up by the soldiers' boots as they moved along. Two hundred yards away nothing was visible. Heavy guns thundered, as the last groups of men were drawing up to the bank of the Donets and lying down in the wet snow.

The guns worked regularly, methodically, but there were so many of them that the shots and the bursts all merged into one continuous roar.

Seryozha was lying beside Kayutkin. He could see the crimson balls of fire, some round, some trailing a tail of fire, flying across the river through the mist, some to the right of him and some over his head; he could hear them whereas they passed, hear them bursting on the far side, and the roar of distant explosions in the town; and the sound stim-

ulated and excited him as it did his comrades.

The Germans sent mortar shells only into those places where they expected concentrations of troops. Sometimes a six-barrelled mortar would fire a burst from the town. And Kayutkin would remark with some apprehension:

"Eh, that bastard's waking up. . . ."

Suddenly, a long, long way behind Seryozha, the peals of thunder rolled on. They came nearer, increased in volume, and spread over the horizon. And over the heads of the men lying on the bank of the Donets came a roaring and howling, and terrible fiery explosions reverberated over the whole of the opposite bank, covering it with a thick pall of heavy smoke.

"Katyushas getting to work," said Kayutkin, taut, with a set expression on his seamed face. "Ivan-the-Woodpecker'll give them one more, and then. . . ."

The echoes behind them had not yet died down, the explosions were still thundering from the opposite bank, when Seryozha without waiting to hear if there had been a command or not, but seeing Kayutkin jump out and begin to run, himself sprang out of the trench and dashed out onto the ice.

Everything seemed quiet as they raced across the ice, although they were being fired upon from the opposite side and men were falling. Waves of black acrid smoke rolled over the men running through the swirling mist, but every one of them was already inspired with the feeling that this time everything was going right and the job would be done.

Seryozha, momentarily stunned by the sudden silence, only came to when he found himself lying beside Kayutkin on the other bank, in a still smoking shell-hole. Kayutkin, his face terrible, was battering away at something straight ahead with his Tommy-gun, and Seryozha could see no more than fifty paces away the vibrating muzzle of a machine-gun emerging from a crack half covered with earth. He began firing at it. The machine-gunner did not notice either Seryozha or Kayutkin, but he did see something further away and fell silent.

The town was far to their right. Hardly any firing was now directed against them, and they advanced further and further from the river bank into the steppe. Some time later, shells coming from the town began bursting along the whole line of advance.

Near the hamlets, invisible in the mist, but familiar to Seryozha, they again met heavy machine- and Tommy-gun fire. They hugged the earth, and remained prone for a long time, until the light guns which were being wheeled by hand overtook them. These guns began plastering the hamlets almost pointblank, and in the end, the group of men broke into one of them together with the guns, which tall, jolly artillerymen kept rolling further and further on. The battalion commander immediately appeared, and telephonists dragged a wire into the cellar of a shattered stone cottage.

Everything had gone well up to the moment of their advance on the halt which was their objective. If they had had tanks, they would have been there long ago, but the ice on the

Donets had not been strong enough to bear them.

Now the men were attacking in complete darkness. When the enemy opened fire, the battalion commander, who was personally leading the operation, was forced to attack with the groups at hand, before his main forces had come up. They forced their way into that village and Kayutkin's group, which was no longer a storm group but simply scattered Tommy-gunners, penetrated pretty deep into the streets and engaged in battle for the school building.

The fire from the school was so heavy that Seryozha stopped shooting and buried his face in the mud. A bullet seared his left arm above the elbow, but the bone was untouched and in the heat of battle he felt no pain. When he at last took a grip on himself and raised his head, there was nobody beside him.

The most probable thing was that his comrades, unable to stand up to the fire, had joined the other men on the outskirts. But to the inexperienced Seryozha it seemed as though all his comrades had been killed, and his heart chilled with horror. He crawled off behind the corner of a house and listened intently. Two Germans ran past him. He could already hear German voices all round him. The firing here had died down, but was stronger on the outskirts, then it died down there too. The battalion's attack had been beaten off.

Far over the town a huge flickering glow stained the rolling clouds of smoke a vivid crimson, and from beneath came the sound of many-tongued roar.

Seryozha, wounded, lay alone in the cold snow and slush in a hamlet occupied by the Germans.

My friend! . . . My friend! . . . As I come to the saddest pages of my story, involuntarily my thoughts return to you. . . .

If only you could have known my agitation in those far-off days of childhood, when we were at school together in the town! More than fifty versts separated us, and as I left home, I was terribly afraid that I should not find you there, that you had already gone—after all, we had not seen each other for the whole summer.

The bare possibility of such a catastrophe used to make my heart sink in that nocturnal hour, when sitting in the cart behind my father, we would enter your village and the tired horse would amble slowly along the street. Without waiting for the cart reaching your house, I would jump down; I knew that you always slept in the loft, and if you had not been there, it would have meant that you had already gone. But was there ever a single occasion when you did not wait for me? I know you would have been late for school rather than leave me alone. . . . We never closed an eye till dawn, we sat there, our bare legs dangling from the edge of the loft, and talked and talked, clapping our hands till the roosting hens flapped their wings in answer. There was the smell of hay, and then the autumn sun, rising over the tops of the forest trees, suddenly shone on our faces



and we saw how much we had changed during the summer. . . .

I remember when we were in our teens and stood one day knee-deep in the green water of the river; our trousers rolled up, you told me you had fallen in love. . . . To tell the truth, I did not like her, but I said:

"It's you that's in love, not me! I wish you luck!"

And you laughed and said:

"Sure enough, you could even break up a friendship to stop a fellow from doing something bad, but who should give advice in matters of love? How often the people nearest to you try to interfere and guide and direct, they bring people together and separate them, and tell you everything and they've ever heard about the girl you're in love with. . . . If only they knew how much harm they do, how they poison the most wonderful moments of life, that can never return again!"

Again, I remember how that—I won't name him, that X—came and joined us. We began talking casually about his friends, with a mocking smile: "He's head over ears in love with her, he just grovels before her, and she's got dirty nails—only that's just between ourselves. . . . And that one, you know, yesterday he got so drunk at a party that he vomited—just between ourselves, you know. . . . And that fellow goes about in old clothes and makes out he's so poor, but really he's just mean. He's not even ashamed to let other people pay for his beer—only just between ourselves, you know. . . ."

You looked at him and said:

"Look here, X, you just clear out of here as quick as you can."

"What d'ye mean, clear out?" said X in surprise.

"Just that, clear out. . . . What's there more despicable than a fellow who doesn't show his friends' faces because he only looks at them from behind? And what can be more despicable than a young fellow who goes about retailing scandal? . . ."

"How proud I was of you. I was of the same mind, but I couldn't have put it so bluntly. . . ."

But the thing I remember best is that summer, when I was far away from you, and realized that my path lay in entering the Youth League. . . .

And then, as always, we met in the autumn in the same hayloft, and I sensed a certain awkwardness on your part, an estrangement, and I felt the same with regard to you. We sat there, our bare legs dangling, as in the days of our childhood, and had nothing to say. Then you spoke suddenly:

"Perhaps you won't understand me, maybe you'll think I haven't done right, in deciding without talking it over with you first, but while I was living here alone the whole summer, I realized that there was no other path for me. I decided to join the Youth League. . . ."

"But that means you'll have other interests and new friends, what about me?" I asked, to test our friendship.

"Yes," he replied sadly. "Of course, that's right, that's how it'll be. Of course, I recognize that it's a matter for everybody's own

conscience, but it would be good if you joined too!"

I couldn't keep him in suspense any longer. We looked straight into each other's eyes and laughed.

Perhaps there never was a happier talk than that last one, sitting in your hayloft with the chickens roosting on the rafters, and the sun peeping over the tips of the pines, when we vowed never to swerve from the path we had taken, and always to be true friends. . . .

Friendship! . . . How many people speak the word when all that they mean is pleasant talk over a bottle of wine, with a patronizing toleration for the other's weaknesses! But what has that to do with friendship?

No, we fought on every occasion, we had no regard for each other's pride—yes, if we could not agree, we wounded each other deeply! And this only strengthened our friendship, gave it added weight and maturity. . . .

I was so often wrong, but if I realized it, I did not shirk from acknowledging it to you. True, the only thing I could say in such cases was that I had been wrong. And you would say:

"Don't worry about it—that does no good. . . . If you've understood, then forget the whole thing. It happens—it's a struggle. . . ."

And then you would look after me better than the kindest of nurses, it may be better than my own mother, because you were a tough lad, with no sentimentality.

And now I must tell how I lost you—it is so long ago, and yet it seems as though it were in this war, not that one. . . . I dragged you through the reeds from that lake, your blood flowed over my hands, and the sun beat down mercilessly; and back there on the bank there was probably nobody left alive under the withering fire pouring onto that narrow reed-grown strip of soil. I dragged you along because I could not imagine that you could cease to live. . . . And you lay there on a bed of rushes, quite conscious, only your lips were dry. And you said:

"Water. . . . Give me a drink. . . ."

But there was no water there, and we had neither messtin nor bottle, otherwise I would have returned to the lake. Then you said:

"Take my boots off carefully, they're still quite good. . . ."

And I understood what you meant. I drew off your big army jackboot which had tramped so many roads—we had been many days on the march, never once having the chance to change the rags wrapping our feet, but I went to the lake, and then, crawled down to it—I myself was tormented by an unbearable thirst. Of course, it was madness to think that I would have time to drink under such fire—it was a miracle that I managed to fill the boot and crawl back.

But when I reached you, you were already dead. Your face was very peaceful. For the first time, I noticed how tall you were—it was not surprising that we had so often been taken for each other. Tears welled in my eyes. My thirst was unbearable, and I seized your boot, that rough, bitter cup of our soldiers' friendship, and weeping, I drained it to the dregs. . . .

Feeling neither cold nor fear, exhausted, frozen, starving, Valya wandered like a stray wolf along the front from hamlet to hamlet, sometimes spending the night right there on the steppe. And every time the front moved, waves of retreating Germans forced her back, nearer and nearer to her home. . . .

She wandered for a day, two days, for a week, wandered aimlessly. It may be that she still hoped to cross the front and then herself began to believe what she had told Seryozha. And for that matter, why should he not come here with some Red Army unit? He had said: "I shall certainly come." And he always kept his word.

During the night when fighting began inside Kamensk and that huge red glow reflected on masses of black smoke was visible for dozens of miles, Valya found refuge in a village fifteen kilometres from the town. There were no Germans there, and Valya, like most of the inhabitants, did not sleep all night, but watched the glow. There was something that made her go on waiting, waiting. . . .

At about eleven in the morning, it became known in the village that Red Army units had broken into Kamensk, there was fighting in the streets, and the Germans had already been driven out of the greater part of the town. Now Germans would begin to pour in—the most terrible Germans of all, those who had been whipped in battle. . . . Valya again took up her bundle in which the housewife where she had stopped, pitying her, had thrown a crust of bread, and left the village. . . .

She walked on, not knowing where. The thaw continued, but the wind had changed, it was colder, the fog lifted and snow-clouds, their clear sharp outlines already gone, drifted across the sky. Valya stopped in the middle of the road, and stood there for a long time holding her bundle, thin, the wind fluttering the wet strands of auburn hair that strayed from beneath her beret. Then she slowly walked along that country road deep in melting snow, in the direction of Krasnodon.

At that moment Seryozha, unarmed, his arm hanging limply, in its bloodstained sleeve, was knocking at the window of the last cottage at the far end of the village.

No, fate had not decreed his death this time. For a long time he had lain in the dirty, wet snow in the middle of that village by the halt, until the Germans had quietened down. There was no hope that the Soviet forces would break into the village again that night. He would have to get away, to go further away from the front. He was in civilian clothes, he could leave his arms here. It was not the first time he had made his way through enemy positions!

In the first dim light of dawn he crawled across the railway line, dragging his wounded arm awkwardly. It was the hour when the good housewife gets up in the cottage and lights a candle until morning light comes. But the good housewives were all sitting with their children in the cellars.

Seryozha crawled about a hundred yards from the railway line, then rose to his feet and walked on until he came to this village.

A girl with reddish plaits who had just

brought water from the well bandaged his arm, tearing up some old rags for the purpose, washed the bloodstained sleeve and rubbed it with ashes. The people living in the cottage were so afraid that the Germans might come at any moment that they did not even give Seryozha anything hot to eat, but simply thrust something upon him to take with him.

And Seryozha, who had not slept all night, went on through the village along the line of the front, seeking Valya.

Winter had returned again, as so often happens on the Donets steppes. Snow fell and did not melt. Then came frost. And towards the end of January, Fenya, Seryozha's sister, who lived away from her parents, came home from market and found the door locked.

"Mummie, are you alone?" asked her oldest boy from the other side of the door.

Seryozha was sitting at the table, supporting himself on one elbow, the other arm hanging. He had always been thin, but now his face had caved in, his cheekbones stood out sharply, and only his eyes met his sister's with the old lively, energetic look.

Fenya told him that almost all the Young Guards were in prison. She already knew from Marina about the arrest of Koshevoi. Seryozha sat in silence, his eyes burning. After a little while he said:

"I'll go, don't be afraid. . . ."

He felt that Fenya was worrying both about him and about her children.

His sister dressed his arm. He changed into woman's clothes, she rolled up his own things into a bundle, and when dusk fell, accompanied him home.

After his sufferings in prison, Seryozha's father had collapsed and spent almost the whole time in bed. His mother, however, was still on her feet. His sisters were not there—neither Dasha, nor his favourite, Nina—they too had gone away somewhere towards the front.

Seryozha began asking his parents if they had heard anything of Valya Borts.

During this time, the parents of the Young Guards had drawn very close to each other, but Maria Andreyevna had said nothing about her daughter to Seryozha's mother.

"And she's not there?" Seryozha asked grimly.

No, Valya was not in prison—that they knew with absolute certainty.

Seryozha undressed and for the first time in a month he lay down in a clean bed, his own bed.

A tiny paraffin lamp was burning on the table. Everything was just the same as it had been when he was a child, but he saw nothing of it. His father, lying in the neighbouring room, coughed till the very walls seemed to shake. But to Seryozha it seemed as though everything was unnaturally quiet, he missed the sound of his sisters bustling about. Only his little nephew was crawling about the earthen floor of his grandfather's room and babbling something in a language all his own.

Seryozha's mother went out on some domestic affairs. A neighbour came into his father's room, a young woman. She came



almost every day, and Seryozha's parents, naively honest themselves, never wondered why she came so often. She began talking to the old man.

The child, playing on the floor, found something and crawled into Seryozha's room, babbling:

"Uncle. . . Uncle. . ."

The woman threw a furtive glance into the room, saw Seryozha, then talked with the old man for a little while longer and left. Seryozha rolled up in his blankets and lay in silence.

The father and mother were already asleep. Everything in the house was dark and silent, but sleep shunned Seryozha; heavy thoughts gave him no peace.

Suddenly heavy blows were heard against the back door, and a voice shouted:

"Open up!"

A second before Seryozha had felt that that unquenchable life-force that had brought him through so many trials had been completely drained from him. He had felt utterly broken. But in the instant when he heard that knocking, his body became strong and agile, and jumping noiselessly out of bed, he ran to the window and moved the blackout curtains very slightly to the side. Everything around about was white, bathed in the even light of the moon. Not only the figure of the German soldier standing before the window with rifle at the ready, but even his shadow was sharply etched against the snow. The mother and father awakened, exchanged a few frightened, sleepy sentences, and remained silent, listening to the battering at the door. Using one hand, to which he was already accustomed, Seryozha put on his trousers, laced and the army boots which had been given to him in the division, although he was unable to fasten the thick leather laces, and went into his parents' bedroom.

"Open the door, but don't put on the light," he said softly.

The blows thundered on, until it seemed though the cottage would collapse.

The mother, losing her head completely, rushed about the room.

The father rose quietly from the bed, and Seryozha could see by his slow silent movements how hard it was for him to make the effort, and how hard the whole thing was for him.

"Nothing to be done, we'll have to open the door," said the old man in a queer thin voice.

Seryozha realized that his father was crying, and there was a lump in his own throat. Keys rattling, the old man went into the porch, saying:

"Right away, right away. . ."

Seryozha noiselessly slipped behind his mother.

His mother ran out heavily into the porch and touched something that rang metallically. There was a tang of frosty air. The mother opened the outer door and stepped aside, holding it.

Three dark figures, one after the other, emerged into the patch of moonlight lighting the porch. The last of the three closed the door behind him, and flashed an electric arch about. Its ray fell upon the mother,

who was standing in the background, by the door leading to the cowhouse. Seryozha, from his dark corner, could see that the hook was unfastened and the door ajar, and realized that his mother had done this to prepare a way for him. But in the same instant, the beam fell upon the old man and upon the lad, hiding behind his back. Seryozha had not thought that they might flash their torches over the porch, and had hoped to slip out into the yard when they went into the room.

Two of them seized him by the arms, and Seryozha cried out with the pain of his wound. They dragged him into the room.

"Light the lamp! What are you standing there for like a young rose!" Solikovsky shouted at the mother.

For a long time she was unable to light the tiny lamp with her shaking hands, and Solikovsky himself at last used his lighter. An SS. man and Fenbong were holding Seryozha.

Seeing this, the mother burst into tears and fell at their feet. She crawled to them, massive and heavy, dragging her gnarled old hands over the earthen floor. The old man stood there, stooping almost to the ground, supporting himself on his stick, his body trembling.

Solikovsky made a superficial search—they had already searched the Tyulenins' home many times before. The soldier pulled a rope from his pocket and began binding Seryozha's arms behind his back.

"Our only son . . . have mercy . . . take everything . . . the cow, the clothes. . ."

God only knows what she was saying. . . Such an aching pity for her filled Seryozha that he was afraid to say a word for fear of bursting into tears.

"Take him away," Fenbong said to the soldier.

The mother hindered him and he contemptuously thrust her away with his foot.

The soldier dragging Seryozha led the way, followed by Fenbong and Solikovsky. Seryozha turned and said:

"Goodbye, Mummie. . . Goodbye, Dad. . ."

His mother rushed at Fenbong and began battering at him with her still strong hands, screaming:

"Murderers! Death's too good for the likes of you! Wait a bit, our troops are coming! . . ."

"Oh, you want to go back there, do you?" roared Solikovsky, and ignoring the old man's hoarse pleas, dragged Alexandra Vassilievna out of the house as she was, in the old dressing gown in which she always slept. The old man had hardly time to throw a coat and shawl over her.

Seryozha was silent when they flogged him, he was silent when Fenbong twisted his arms behind him and jerked him up on the rack, he was silent despite the wracking pain in his wounded arm. It was only when Fenbong struck the wound with a ramrod that Seryozha ground his teeth.

His vitality was amazing. He was thrown into a cell alone, and immediately began tapping the walls to find out who were his neighbours. Raising himself on tiptoe, he examined the slit beneath the ceiling—could

he not somehow widen it, break a board and slip out even into the yard? He was convinced that he would get right away, if only he could get out of the locked cell. He sat down and recalled how the windows were arranged in the place where he had been interrogated and tortured, whether the door leading from the corridor into the yard had been locked. Oh, if only there had not been that wounded arm! . . . No, he still felt that all was not yet lost. On these clear, frosty nights the roar of artillery on the Donets penetrated into the cells.

Next morning he was brought face to face with Vitya Lukyanchenko.

"No. . . I'd heard of him as living somewhere near, but I never saw him," said Vitya Lukyanchenko, looking past Seryozha with his velvety dark eyes, which were all that lived in his face.

Seryozha was silent.

Then Vitya Lukyanchenko was led away, and a few moments later his mother entered the room, accompanied by Solikovsky.

They tore the clothes from the old woman, the mother of eleven children, threw her down onto the bloodstained pallet and began flogging her with wires in front of her son.

Seryozha did not turn away, he watched them beating his mother in the same silence.

Then they beat him in front of his mother, and he was still silent. And even Fenbong lost all control of himself, seized an iron bar from the table and brought it down upon the elbow of Seryozha's good arm. The boy went white and beads of sweat stood out on his forehead. Then he said:

"That's . . . all. . ."

That day the whole group arrested in the Krasnodon settlement were at last brought to the prison. Most of them were unable to walk, the soldiers seized them under the arms, dragged them along the floor and flung them into the already crowded cells. Kolya Sumskey was still able to move, but one of his eyes had been split open with a whip and only the empty socket was left. Tossya Elisseyenko, that same girl who had cried out so gaily as she saw the doves winging off into the sky, Tossya Elisseyenko could only lie on her face—before being sent here, they had seated her on a red hot stove.

Directly after they arrived, a gendarme came into the girls' cell for Lyuba. All the girls, and Lyuba herself, were sure that she was being taken for execution. She said good-bye to all of them and was taken away.

But Lyuba was not being taken for execution. Major-General Kler, the district field commandant, had ordered that she be brought to him for interrogation.

It was the day when letters and parcels could be brought to the prison, a quiet frosty windless day; the sound of axes, footsteps, the rattle of buckets at the well, carried far in the air, sparkling with sun and snow. Elizaveta Alexeyevna and Lucia always brought their parcels together. They had wrapped up the bundle of food and brought the pillow which Volodya has asked for in his last letter, and then had come along the beaten path in the snow across the waste ground to the long prison building which brooded over the sur-

rounding district, with its white walls and snow-covered roof, the shadowed side etched sharp blue.

Both of them, mother and daughter, had become so thin that they resembled each other more than ever, they might have been taken for sisters. The mother, who had always been sharp and abrupt, now seemed to be nothing but nerves.

The voices of the women crowding about the prison and the fact that they were all holding parcels while the prison door remained silent and immobile gave Elizaveta Alexeyevna and Lucia a premonition of evil. At the entrance stood a German sentry, as usual, not vouchsafing the women a glance, and on the steps sat a policeman in a yellow padded jacket. But he was accepting no parcels.

Neither Elizaveta Alexeyevna nor Lucia needed to look in order to know who was there, they met at the same place every day.

Zemnukhov's mother, a little old woman, was standing in front of the steps holding a bundle and a parcel in front of her, saying:

"At least take a little of the food. . ."

"Not necessary. We'll feed him ourselves," said the policeman, without looking at her.

"He asked for a sheet. . ."

"We'll give him a fine bed today. . ."

Elizaveta Alexeyevna went up to the entrance and said in her sharp voice:

"Why aren't you taking in parcels?"

The policeman said nothing and paid not the slightest attention to her.

"Well, we're in no hurry, we'll stand here until somebody comes out that'll answer us!" said Elizaveta Alexeyevna, looking round the crowd of women.

They all remained standing there until the sound of many footsteps came from the other side of the door and the rattle of somebody turning a key in the lock. In such cases the women always tried to look in through the gate to the windows opening on that side, and sometimes they even managed to see their children who were in those cells. The crowd surged to the left side of the gate. But at Sergeant Bolmann's command, several soldiers emerged from the gate and began to drive them away. The women scattered and again returned, and many began to call and shout.

Elizaveta Alexeyevna and Lucia went aside and watched in silence.

"They're going to kill them today," said Lucia.

"There's only one thing I pray for, that they won't break his wings before they kill him, that he won't shiver and shake in front of those curs, that he'll spit in their faces! . . ." said Elizaveta Alexeyevna, in a low, muffled voice, and a terrible fire in her eyes.

Meanwhile, their children were going through the last and the worst of the trials that had fallen to their lot.

Zemnukhov, swaying, stood in front of Meister Brückner; blood was running down his face and his head kept sinking weakly, but he nevertheless tried to hold it erect and for the first time in those four weeks of silence he spoke:

"So you can't! . . ." he said. "You can't! . . ."



all the countries you've seized... Forgotten all honour, all decency... and you can't... you aren't strong enough..." And he laughed.

Late that evening two German soldiers carried Oulya into the cell, her long plaits sweeping the ground, her head hanging helplessly, her face chalk-white, and flung her down by the wall.

"Lilechka..." she said to the oldest Ivakhin girl. "Raise my blouse, it's burning..."

Lilya, herself barely able to move, but caring for her friends with the last of her strength, gently rolled up the blood-stained blouse, and then shrank back in horror and burst into tears; on Oulya's back burned a bleeding, five-pointed star.

Never, while one of this generation lives, will the Krasnodon people forget that night. The waning moon, hanging low in the sky, shone with brilliant clarity, so that the steppe was visible for miles around. The frost sharpened. Along the whole Donets, to the north, flashes lighted up the sky and the sounds of battle were heard, at times loud and then faded away to a faint murmur.

None of those parents slept that night. And it was not only the parents who were wakeful—the whole town knew that the Young Guards were about to be executed. People sat in the dim light of their tiny smoky paraffin lamps, or in the darkness in their cold houses, and some went out into their yards and stood for a long time in the frost, listening for voices or the sound of lorries or shots. In the cells, too, all were wakeful, except for those who lay unconscious. Those Young Guards who were the last to be tortured saw the burgomeister Stetsenko come to the prison. Everybody knew that the burgomeister came to the prison before executions, to sign the sentences.

In the cells, too, the thunder of battle rolling along the Donets could be plainly heard.

Oulya, lying on her side, her head resting against the wall, knocked through to the cells in the next cell.

"Boys, do you hear that?... Pull yourselves together... The Red Army is coming... Our men are coming..."

The heavy tramp of soldiers' boots was heard from the corridor, and a cell door banged. The soldiers began leading the prisoners out through the corridor and into the street, not passing through the yard, but straight through the main entrance. The girls, sitting in their coats in overcoats or warm jackets, helped each other to put on their hats or arrange their plaits. Lilya dressed Nuyca Sokova, who was lying motionless on the floor, and Shura Brovina did the same for her beloved friend Oulya. Some of the girls scribbled farewell letters and concealed them in the clothing they left behind.

In her last parcel Oulya had received clean linen, and now she began rolling her soiled things into a bundle. Suddenly tears choked her, she had not the strength to repress them, and burying her face in her bloodstained clothing, to smother the sound, she shrank into the corner of the cell and sat there for some time. They were led out into the moon-bathed

waste land and seated in two lorries. The first to be brought out was Stakhovich, drained of strength and lost to all thought or understanding; with a swing he was flung into the lorry. Many of the Young Guards were unable to walk. They carried out Anatoli Popov, whose foot had been hacked off. Victor Petrov, his eyes gouged out, was led by Ragozin and Zhenya Shepelov. Volodya Osmukhin's right hand had been cut off, but he walked alone. Vanya Zemmukhov was carried by Tolya Orlov and Kovalyov. After them, swaying like a reed, came Seryozha Tyulenin.

They were placed in separate lorries—the girls in one, the lads in the other.

The soldiers slammed up the sides, and then clambered over them into the crowded lorries. Unteroffizier Fenbong took his place beside the driver of the first lorry, and they drove off. They took the road across the waste land past the children's hospital and the Voroshilov school, the girls' lorry leading. Oulya, Sasha Bondareva and Lilya began to sing:

"Tortured to death in slavery's chains,

A glorious death you have won."

All the girls joined in, and the boys in the second lorry sang with them. The sound carried far in the still, frosty air.

Swinging round to the left, round the last house, the lorry took the road leading to Pit No. 5.

Seryozha, sitting huddled against the back of the truck greedily drank in the frosty air... Now the lorries had left the Vyselki turning, soon they should cross the ravine... No, Seryozha knew he had not the strength for it. But in front of him Kovalyov was kneeling, his hands bound behind his back. He was still strong, it was not for nothing that they had tied his hands. Seryozha nudged him with his head, and Kovalyov turned.

"Just... The ravine's coming..." Seryozha whispered and jerked his head towards the side.

Kovalyov glanced over his shoulder and moved his bound hands. Seryozha brought his teeth to the knot, but he was so weak that several times he was flung against the side, striking his forehead. Nevertheless, he struggled as though it were for his own freedom. And at last the knot was loosed. Kovalyov began moving his hands and fingers, still holding them behind his back.

"Avengers arise stern and threatening,

And stronger than ours their hand..." sang the girls and lads.

The lorries swung into the ravine and the leading car approached the rise. The second, puffing, also entered. Kovalyov placed his foot on the back of the machine, and with a spring was over the side and running along the ravine, ploughing up the snow.

In the first moments of flurried indecision, the lorry had crawled out of the ravine, and Kovalyov had disappeared. The soldiers hesitated to jump out for fear that others might run off, and began firing at random from the lorry. Hearing the shots, Fenbong stopped his truck and jumped out. The lorries stood

<sup>1</sup> A revolutionary song, the favourite of Vladimir Lenin.

still while Fenbong swore in his high-pitched, shrill voice.

"Got away! . . . Got away! . . ." Seryozha shouted triumphantly, with an amazing strength in his thin voice, and began cursing, and on his lips, the curses sounded like a sacred vow.

The surface installations at Pit No. 5, which had tilted sideways after the explosion came into view.

The lads and girls sang the *Internationale*.

They were taken from the lorries and herded into the ice-cold pit head baths, and kept there for some time—awaiting the arrival of Brückner, Balder and Stetsenko. The gendarmes began undressing them, some of them were wearing good clothes and boots.

The Young Guards were able to bid farewell to each other. Klava Kovalyova was able to sit beside Vanya and lay her hand upon his forehead and was not parted from him again.

They were taken out in small groups and thrown down the pit shaft one by one. And those who could, said those last few words that he or she wanted to leave to the world.

Fearing that not all of them would perish in that pit, where several dozen bodies had already been thrown, the Germans hurled two pit tubs down on top of them. But for several days afterwards the sound of groans could be heard from below.

Oleg stood before the Feldkommandant Kler, both arms broken, his hollow face bringing his cheekbones out in sharp relief. His hair was quite grey over his temples, but the large eyes under their golden lashes looked out with the same clear expression, no, even clearer than usual.

In front of Kler, a man who had grown callous from the murders he had committed in his lifetime, there stood one who was not merely a sixteen-year-old lad but a young leader of his people, one who saw clearly his own path in life, the path of his nation among others, the path of all mankind.

"It is not you who are terrible," he said, "you are already doomed—but that which has given birth to you after mankind has existed so long on the earth and attained such heights in the world of thought and labour. . . The murder-lust has rotted your souls, not only of individuals, but of whole nations, it's a threat to the very existence of mankind. . . Your murder-lust is more terrible than the plague, it will rot the world as long as the blessings of life are enjoyed by those who do not create them, as long as the scourings of humanity have arbitrary power over people, gathering into their hands all the riches of the world. . . In vain do you gentlemen in your snow-white linen hope to escape the judgement of history. Stained with blood, you stand already before its dreadful eyes. My only regret is that I shall not be able to fight any longer in the ranks of my people and of all mankind for a just, honest way of life in the world. To all those fighting for this way of life I send my last greeting! . . ."

Oleg Koshevoi was shot on January 31st, and his body buried in a common grave with those of others shot that day.

But they tortured Lyuba Shevtsova until

February 7th, trying to force her to tell them where the transmitter was. Before she was shot, she managed to send a note to her mother:

"Goodbye, Mummie, your daughter Lyuba is going into the cold ground."

When she was being led out to be shot, she sang one of her favourite songs:

"On the broad Moscow land. . . ."

The SS. Rotenführer who was leading her to execution wanted to place her on her knees and shoot her from behind, but Lyuba would not kneel, and took the shot in her face.

The people of Krasnodon still had to endure all the misery that the fleeing German army brought. The Germans blew up the pits, factories and business premises, and all the large buildings both in the town itself and in the neighbouring district.

A week after Lyuba Shevtsova's death, the Red Army units entered Krasnodon and Voroshilovgrad simultaneously. On the fourteenth of February Soviet tanks broke into the town, and immediately afterwards Soviet power returned.

For ten days, watched by huge crowds, the miners brought the bodies of the murdered Young Guards out of Pit No. 5. And throughout those ten days, the mothers of the dead never left the pit, receiving the mutilated bodies of their children in their arms.

Elena Nikolayevna had gone to Rovenki while Oleg was still alive. But she was not able to do anything for her son, and he never knew that his mother was so near to him.

In the presence of Oleg's mother and the other members of his family, the people of Rovenki brought the bodies of Oleg and Lyuba Shevtsova out of the trench and buried them with military honours.

It was difficult to recognize Elena Nikolayevna Koshevoi in that shrunken aged woman with dark sunken cheeks and eyes filled with that deep sorrow that only a mother's great heart can know. Those months during which she had helped her son, and especially his death, which had brought her such suffering, had developed in her a spiritual strength that raised her above her own personal sorrow. It was as though a curtain had dropped opening before her the whole wide world of human struggle, effort and passion. She had followed her son into that world, and before her lay a life of service to the people.

In those days the secrets of other German crimes came to light. The miners' grave was found in the park. When it was opened, they were found standing in the ground. First the heads were uncovered, then the shoulders, the trunks, the arms. Among them were the bodies of Valko, Shulga and Vdovenko with her child in her arms.

The bodies of the Young Guards, exhumed from Pit No. 5, were buried in a common grave in the park.

All the surviving Young Guards attended the funeral—Ivan Turkenich, Valya Borts, Zhora Arutyunants, Olya and Nina Ivanovs, Radik Yurkin and others.

Valya Borts had made her way home from near Kamensk, and Maria Andreyevna had



sent her to friends in Voroshilovgrad, where Valya had met the Red Army. Her father was also alive, he had concealed himself with his wife's relatives in Stalino. But at that time Stalino was still in German hands, and Maria Andreyevna and Valya knew nothing of his safety.

Ivan Turkenich managed to cross the front and got leave from his unit in order to visit his home town. But Sergei Levashov was killed while crossing the lines.

Stepa Safonov was killed too. He was in the part of Kamensk occupied by the Red Army during the first night attack, took part in the fighting with one of the groups, and was killed.

Anatoli Kovalyov was sheltered by a workman in a settlement. His body, covered with wounds was one mass of wounds. To bandage him was impossible, and the workman and his wife simply bathed him with warm water and wrapped a sheet around him. They concealed Kovalyov for several days, but it was dangerous for him to stay longer, and he went to relatives living in that part of the Donbas not yet liberated.

Ivan Fyodorovich Protsenko met the Red Army in the village where Marfa Kornienko lived, from which he had led the partisan struggle in the German rear during the previous weeks. In that work he had been helped by his wife Katya, teaching in Nizhne-Alexandrovka, old Narezchny and Marfa, and her husband Gordei Kornienko, who had been a prisoner of war, and rescued by the Young Guard.

The day before the Soviet troops occupied the village, Ivan Fyodorovich, accompanied by the same old man who had driven the Koshevoi family and who had given Ivan Fyodorovich his clothes, went to the village Soviet where some German gendarmes and police fleeing from beyond the Donets had halted. Many of the village people were crowding round the house wanting to hear or certain how near the Red Army was, or simply for the pleasure of seeing the retreating Germans.

While Ivan Fyodorovich and the old man were standing there, some more police—Russians—raced up on a sledge. Jumping out beside the old man, and looking round with frenzied eyes, they asked him hastily: "Where is the Herr Chief of Police?"

The old man's eyes narrowed.

"Herr Chief . . . the gentleman . . . it seems the comrades are right after you?"

The policemen cursed, but they were in too great a hurry even to strike the old man and ran into the cottage.

Soon after, the gendarmes hastily swallowing their food ran out and raced off on sledges,

leaving only a cloud of snow behind them.

The next day the Red Army entered the village.

Ivan Fyodorovich and a group of partisans crossed the Donets and got his little car out of a deserted stone quarry near the station of Mytyakinsk. It was undamaged, its tanks filled, with even a spare tin of petrol. It was everlasting, that car, like the time which had produced it. And during the first days, when the returning authorities in Voroshilovgrad had no cars of their own, all envied Ivan Fyodorovich that modest machine.

It was in this car that Ivan Fyodorovich went to Krasnodon to pay tribute to the memory of the Young Guards.

He also had plenty to do there. The Krasnodon Trust had to be started again, the pits restored and set working. In addition, he wanted to know the details of how the Young Guards died.

Stetsenko and Solikovskiy had fled with the Germans, but the investigator Kuleshov had been caught by the people, and handed over to Soviet justice. And through him the depositions of Stakhovich became known, and the part which Vyrikova and Lyadskaya had played in the death of the Young Guards.

Over the grave of the Young Guards their comrades who had remained alive vowed to avenge them. A temporary monument was erected, a simple wooden obelisk, and on its pedestal were written the names of all the members of the Young Guard who had given their lives for their country.

Here are those names:

Oleg Koshevoi, Ivan Zemnukhov, Oulyana Gromova, Sergei Tyulenin, Lyubov Shevtsova, Anatoli Popov, Nikolai Sumskey, Vladimir Osmukhin, Anatoli Orlov, Sergei Levashov, Stepan Safonov, Victor Petrov, Antonina Elisseyenko, Victor Lukyanchenko, Klavdia Kovalyova, Maya Peglivanova, Alexandra Bondareva, Vassili Bondarev, Alexandra Dubrovina, Lidia Androsova, Antonina Mashchenko, Evgeni Moshkov, Lidia Ivanikhina, Antonina Ivanikhina, Boris Glovan, Vladimir Ragozin, Evgeni Shepelov, Anna Sopova, Vladimir Zhdanov, Vassili Pirozhok, Semyon Ostapenko, Angelina Samoshina, Nina Minayeva, Leonid Dadyshev, Alexander Pishchenko, Anatoli Nikolayev, Demyan Fomin, Nina Gerassimova, Georgi Shcherbakov, Nina Startseva, Nadezhda Petlya, Vladimir Kulikov, Evgenia Kyikova, Nikolai Zhukov, Vladimir Zagoruiko, Yuri Vitsenovsky, Mikhail Grigoryev, Vassili Borissov, Nina Kezikova, Antonina Dyachenko, Nikolai Mironov, Vassili Tkachev, Pavel Palaguta, Dmitri Ogurtsov, Victor Subotin.

*Translated by Eve Manning*

## THE STOREHOUSE OF THE SUN

In a certain village near the Bludovo Marshes not far from the town of Pereslavl-Zalesky there lived two orphans; their mother died of illness and their father had been killed at the front.

We lived next door but one to the orphans and, like our neighbours, helped them as much as we could. They were fine youngsters. Nastya was like a tiny golden chick on long legs. Her hair was neither dark nor light but had flashes of gold in it; the freckles on her face were like gold coins and they were so many that there was no room for them all—they spread all over. Only her little nose was unfreckled and turned up perkily at the tip.

Mitrasha was two years younger than his sister—just ten and a bit. He was short, stockily built, and had a high forehead and a head broad at the back. He was a hardy and stubborn lad.

"A regular Little Man," the teachers at school called him.

The Little Man was as freckled as his sister, with the same unfreckled nose, which, like hers, turned up perkily.

The children inherited the peasant household from their parents: the two-roomed log-cabin, the cow "Dawn", the calf "Girlie", the goat, some sheep, chickens, a cock called "Petya" and "Horse-radish", the hog.

Together with this wealth the two children inherited the troubles involved in looking after the livestock. But just consider the difficulties our children managed to cope with in the war years! At first, as I have already said, distant relatives and neighbours came to their help. It wasn't long, however, until the youngsters learned to do everything themselves and soon began to live quite decently.

As far as possible they joined in the social life of the village. Their pert noses were to be seen in the collective farm fields, in the farmyard, at meetings and at the places where the farmers were digging deep anti-tank ditches.

Although we were newcomers to the village we knew everything that went on in every house and we can truthfully say that in no other house did the family live and work in such a friendly atmosphere as in that of our two little favourites.

Like her mother before her, Nastya was up long before the sun, at the first crowing of the cock. With a long twig in her hand she drove out her precious herd and then dashed back home. She did not return to bed but lit the stove, peeled potatoes, prepared dinner and was busy with odds and ends of housework until nightfall.

Mitrasha had learned from his father how to make wooden vessels—barrels, buckets and wash-tubs. He had a jack-plane twice as big as himself—the people in this part

of Russia call it a "ladilo"—with which he trimmed up the boards, fitted them together and bound them with iron or twig hoops. As they had a cow and could live on her milk, the children had no great need to make tubs and buckets to sell on the market but the good people of the village wanted them—someone would want a wooden bucket, someone else—a waterbutt, another—a barrel in which to pickle cucumbers or mushrooms, or just some little wooden tub to plant flowers in.

The boy made the things they wanted and they always found a way to repay him. Apart from his cooping, however, he had all the man's work of the little farmstead on his shoulders and also those little things one does for the community as a whole. He attended all the meetings, tried to understand what was going on in the community and most probably did understand something of it.

It was a good thing that Nastya was a couple of years older than her brother or he would have become so overwhelmingly proud that the friendship between them would not have been what it was, a splendid equality. As it was, Mitrasha would remember how his father had instructed his mother and in imitation would try to teach his sister. The sister, however, didn't take him very seriously, she just stood by and smiled. The Little Man would begin to bluster and usually ended up by saying with a sniff: "There you go again!"

"What are you blustering about?" his sister would object.

"There you go again!" her angry brother would say. "You're the one that's doing the blustering."

"No, it's you!"

"There you go again!"

Then, seeing that she had upset him, Nastya would stroke the back of her brother's head and no sooner did the girl's hand touch the broad head than his father's hot temper cooled in him.

"Let's go weeding together!" the girl would say.

Yes, it was a hard life for everybody during the war. The children had their fill of worries and failures. Their friendship, however, surmounted all obstacles and they got along famously. We decided that the loss of their parents had brought them closer.

## II

The sour Russian cranberry, the "klyukva", is very beneficial to the health; it grows in the marshlands in summer and is gathered in the late autumn. But not everybody knows that the very best, the "sweet" cranberries, as we call them, are those that lie under the snow until spring. We gather these dark-red spring berries and boil them in a



sauced with sugar-beets and then eat the jam with tea instead of sugar. We tried them and found that the jam was not so bad, quite edible, in fact; the sour flavour replaces the sweetness of sugar and on hot days it's a very good drink. A wonderful blanchmange can be made from these "sweet" berries and when spoiled, their juice makes an excellent cold drink. According to Russian peasant lore, the cranberry's a remedy for all ills.

That spring the snow in the fir thickets held until the end of April but down by the swamps it was much warmer and there the snow had melted. When Mitrasha and Nastya heard of this they decided to go berrying. Long before dawn Nastya fed their livestock. Mitrasha took his father's double-barrelled Tula gun, decoys for grouse and of course the compass. He remembered that his father never went to the forest without this. Mitrasha used to wonder why.

"You've been roaming through the forest all your life and you know it like the palm of your hand. What do you need that arrow for?" he had often asked his father.

"You see, Mitrasha," his father would answer, "this arrow is like a kind mother to you in the forest; sometimes when the sky is covered with clouds you can't find your way—the sun; you try to guess, lose your way and then get hungry. Then you take a look at the arrow and it shows you the way home, where you will be fed. That arrow is truer than any friend; a friend may deceive you, but the arrow—never, turn whichever way you like always points to the north."

Mitrasha looked at his marvellous instrument and closed it so that the needle would not swing about while he was on his way. He put on a cap so old that the peak had split in two—the upper, leather layer poked high up in the air and the lower part came down almost to his nose. Then he put on his father's old jacket, which had once been made of good homespun material, but now was tattered strips. The boy held these strips of cloth together with a wide belt round his waist, so that his father's jacket served him as an overcoat reaching to his heels. The hunter's son thrust his axe into his belt, slung the bag with the compass over his right shoulder, the shotgun over his left and thus became the terror of bird and beast.

Nastya, who was getting ready to go too, hanging a large basket at her side by means of a long towel over her shoulder.

"What's the towel for?" asked Mitrasha. "You remember, don't you," said Nastya, "how Mother used to go mushrooming?"

"A fat lot you know: you gather lots of mushrooms and then the basket gets so heavy that it cuts into your shoulder."

"Maybe we'll get even more cranberries."

Mitrasha was just going to butt in with his usual: "There you go again!" when he remembered what his Father had told him about berries just as he was leaving for the army. Did you remember when Father was telling about cranberries, he said there is a palestinka<sup>1</sup> in the forest. . . ."

<sup>1</sup>Palestinka—a dialect term for any favorite haunt in the forest.

"I remember that he spoke about the berries and said he knew a place where they were so plentiful that they just dropped into your lap, but I don't remember anything about a palestinka. I remember he warned us about a bad place, the Blind Yelan."<sup>2</sup>

"That's it, the palestinka that he spoke about is near the Yelan," said Mitrasha. "Father said: you go to the High Ridge and then keep going north and after cutting through the Noisy Wood you still keep north until . . . there you'll see the palestinka, red as blood, just one mass of cranberries. Nobody has ever been to that palestinka yet."

They were already at the door when Mitrasha said this. While he had been talking Nastya remembered that she had a pot of boiled potatoes left over from the day before. And forgetting all about the palestinka, she tiptoed over to the hob and tipped the potatoes into her basket.

"Perhaps we shall lose our way," she thought. "We've enough bread and there's a bottle of milk but the potatoes might come in handy."

Mitrasha, thinking that his sister was still behind him, kept on about his marvellous palestinka and said that it was true that they would have to pass the notorious Blind Yelan where many people, cows and horses had disappeared.

"What's this palestinka you're talking about?" asked Nastya.

"Then you didn't hear anything I said," exclaimed Mitrasha and painstakingly went over the whole story again about the secret palestinka with its myriads of sweet cranberries.

### III

Bludovo Marshes (Bludovo might be translated "Tanglefoot"), where we have often lost our bearings, begins, like all other stretches of marshlands, with a tangled, impenetrable mass of willows and alder bushes. The first man hacked a way through the swamp-edge shrubbery with axe in hand and blazed a trail for others to follow. Human feet trod out a path, the turf settled and formed a gully along which a stream of water ran.

Without much difficulty the children made their way through this undergrowth in the dark that heralds the approach of dawn. When there was no longer any scrub to obscure their view, the children beheld the Bludovo Marshes, stretching away in the first early light and looking for all the world like a boundless sea. As a matter of fact, Bludovo Marshes are the bottom of an ancient sea and there are hummocks dotted about the marshlands just as on the sea bed. In our Bludovo Marshes the hummocks form sandy ridges covered with firs and pines. The children negotiated the first stretch of swamp and came out onto the High Ridge, whence, in the still faint light of early dawn, they got a glimpse of the "Noisy Wood".

Before they reached "Noisy Wood", right beside the path, they saw their first blood-red berries. These the berry-pickers popped into their mouths. A person who had never

<sup>2</sup>Yelan—a deep hole in the middle of a swamp, as dangerous as a hole in the ice.

in his life tasted autumn cranberries would gasp at the very acidity of the spring berry. The village orphans, however, knew autumn cranberries perfectly well and when they put the spring cranberries in their mouths they both exclaimed:

"How sweet they are!"

"Noisy Wood", still covered with the dark green of the whortleberry, opened in a broad inviting lane. Here and there among last year's green, this year's spring flowers were poking up their heads, delicate snowdrops and the tiny, violet, sweet-smelling flowers of the wolf-bass.

"They smell nice," said Mitrasha, "try and break a flower off the wolf-bass."

Nastya tried in vain to break the stem of the bass plant.

"Why is it called the 'wolf' bass?" she asked.

"Father says that the wolves plait themselves baskets from it," answered her brother with a laugh.

"Are there really any wolves here?"

"Of course there are! Father said that a fierce old wolf, the Grey Landlord, haunts this place."

"Oh yes, the one that killed our sheep before the war."

"Yes, Father said that Grey Landlord has a lair somewhere among the fallen trees on the Dry River."

"Will he come after us?"

"Let him try!" said the hunter in the double-peaked cap.

While the children were talking, the dawn approached. Noisy Wood had filled with the songs of birds and the noises of beasts. They were not all in the wood, but all the sounds emanating from the damp and dull swamps concentrated there, where the pine trees and resonant dry wood gave back the echoes.

Birds and beasts were obviously at pains to express one splendid word common to them all. Even little Nastya and Mitrasha understood their efforts. They all wanted to express the same marvellous word.

They could see a singing bird perched on a bough, with every one of its feathers trembling from the exertion. However, birds cannot pronounce what we call words so they sing, or scream or chatter.

"Tay-take!" chattered the great wood-grouse, almost inaudible in the dark forest.

"Shvark, shvark!" screamed the wild drake as he winged his way over the river.

"Quack-quack," answered the wild duck on the lake.

"Goo-goo-goo," piped the red robin on the birch tree.

A snipe, with its long bill resembling a flattened knitting needle, went floundering through the air like a wild sheep. The sandpiper screamed something like "live, live." The quail grumbled and chuffed, the partridge guffawed like a mocking witch.

We hunters who have been acquainted with these sounds from childhood and can distinguish one from another, are pleased when we hear them and we know what word it is that birds and animals are working so hard over but cannot pronounce. When we hear them in the forest at daybreak we say to them as we would to human beings:

"Greetings!"

And then they seem to grow happier, they seem to take up that wonderful word that comes flying to them from a human tongue.

They scream in answer, they snort, they quack, they shout "tay-take" and "shvark" striving in all their various voices to answer us:

"Greetings, greetings, greetings!"

Out of that Babel of sounds came one which had nothing in common with any of the others.

"Did you hear that?" asked Mitrasha.

"Of course I did. I've been listening to it for a long time and it frightens me," answered Nastya.

"There's nothing to be frightened about. Father taught me there was nothing to fear. He told me that the hare screams like that in spring."

"What makes them scream like that?"

"Father said that Mr. Hare is shouting 'Greetings, Mrs. Hare!'"

"What's that queer booming sound?"

"Father said that's the bittern, the water bull."

"What's he booming about?"

"Father said that he has a wife too, and that in his own language he shouts 'Greeting Mrs. Bittern.'"

Quite suddenly the atmosphere freshened and became full of animated life, as though the earth had been washed clean and the sky shone brighter; the forest trees gave off the fragrance of buds and bark. Then it seemed that all the noises of the marshes were drowned by one triumphant cry that overwhelmed everything else, as though all the people of the earth were able to shout in unison:

"Victory, victory!"

"What's that?" asked Nastya who had brightened up at the sound.

"Father said that the herons greet the sunrise like that. You'll see, the sun will soon be up."

The sun, however, had still not risen when the cranberry hunters marched downhill towards the big swamp. The triumphant welcome to the sun had not yet begun down here. The night mist still hung like a heavy grey blanket over the stunted firs and birch and muffled the enchanting symphony sound in the "Noisy Wood". Here the only sound was a dreary and monotonous howl.

Nastya shivered with the cold; the dark and pungent odour of the marsh plants irritated her nostrils. The Golden Chick Long Legs felt herself weak and puny, though faced with the inescapable force of death.

"What's that, Mitrasha," she asked, "what is that howling away in the distance?"

"Father told me that the wolves on the Dry River howl like that; I think that Grey Landlord howling now. Father said that all the wolves on Dry River had been killed except Grey, him they just can't kill."

"Why is he making such a horrible din now?"

"Father said that wolves howl in the spring because there is nothing left for them to eat. And Grey has been left alone, so he just howls."



The damp atmosphere of the marshes penetrated to the bone and chilled the youngsters. They hesitated before going any farther into the boggy and dangerous swamp.

"Where are we going?" asked Nastya.

Mitrasha took out his compass, found north and indicated a faint path leading in that direction.

"We'll go north along that path," he said.

"No," answered Nastya. "Let's go down the broad path which everybody else uses. Do you remember what Father said about that terrible place called the Blind Yelan, where so many people and cattle have disappeared? Mitrasha, don't let's go that way. Everybody goes the other way so that must be where the cranberries grow."

"A fat lot you know," said Mitrasha, interrupting her. "We're going to the north as Father said. That's where the palestinka is, that nobody else has ever seen."

"There you are again!" exclaimed the wise Little Golden Chick. "You know that Father loved telling tales, maybe there isn't any palestinka after all."

"A fat lot you know," said the Little Man sulkily.

Nastya could see that her brother was cross so she smiled and stroked the back of his head. Mitrasha calmed down at once and they set out along the path indicated by the crow. They did not go side by side as they had walked before, but one behind the other.

#### IV

A couple of hundred years ago the wind, the Great Sower, carried two seeds into Bludovo Marshes—a pine seed and a fir seed. The seeds were deposited in an opening alongside a large flat stone. . . . Since then, for something like two hundred years the pine and the fir have grown together. Their roots became intertwined in infancy and their trunks shot up to the light side by side, each trying to outdo the other. The two trees fought strenuously through their roots for nourishment and through their branches for air and light. The North wind that is such a source of trouble to the trees sometimes blew over the swamps and rocked them. At such times the trees groaned and wailed like living people so that they could be heard all over the Bludovo Marshes. The sound was so much like the groaning and howling of living people that the vixen curled up in a ball on a tuft of moss lifted her sharp muzzle suspiciously to the air.

The groaning and howling sounded so like human beings that a dog that had grown wild in Bludovo Marshes howled when he heard it, longing for the company of man, and the fox howled out his implacable hatred of man.

The children reached the Recumbent Rock as the first rays of the sun appeared over the stunted trees of the swamp and lit up the Noisy Wood; the trunks of the pine forest glowed up like candles lit in the temple of Nature. The birds' greeting to the rising sun was carried faintly to the rock where the children sat down to rest. The early morning gave out but little warmth. The marsh-

lands were still in the grip of the cold and the tiny puddles were covered with ice.

All nature was silent and the children, chilled to the marrow, were so quiet that Kosach the quail paid not the slightest attention to them. He was perched high up where a branch of the pine and a branch of the fir had grown together to form a bridge between the two trees. Roosting close to the fir-tree on a perch that was rather wide for him the quail seemed to become illuminated in the rays of the rising sun until his comb resembled a flame-coloured flower. The feathers at the base of his black breast changed from dark blue to green. His magnificent tail spread out like a gorgeous rainbow.

Mr. Quail, when he saw the sun appear above the tops of the dwarf fir-trees in the swamp, began hopping about on his wide perch showing the clean white feathers under his tail and wings.

"Choooff! Shee!" he cried.

In his language "choooff" probably means "sun" and "shee" no doubt has the same meaning as our word "greetings".

Kosach's "choooffing" lovecall was answered by similar choooffs and a flapping of wings all over the marshes; huge birds as like Kosach as two peas in a pod came flying from all parts of the swamp to alight near the Recumbent Rock.

The children, holding their breath, sat silently on the cold stone, waiting until the sun would warm them up a little. At last the first ray peeped over the tip of a nearby dwarf fir and played on the children's cheeks. Kosach on his high perch paused in his welcome to the sun, stopped choooffing and hopping. He settled low on his perch, spread his neck along the branch and trilled a song like the murmuring of a brook. Every cock-bird amongst the dozens that had alighted on the ground below him stretched out his neck and sang the same song. Their combined efforts sounded like a stream in full spate rumbling over hidden pebbles.

How often have we hunters, awaiting the dawn on a cold morning, heard this song of the quail in search of a mate. How often have we tried to reproduce its meaning. When we tried to repeat their warbling in our own language we got something like this:

"Preen your feathers,  
Oo-goo-goo.  
Preen your feathers,  
Pull, pull, pull."

The birds singing so harmoniously together were actually preparing to quarrel. While they were warbling a sort of side-show was taking place in the fir-tree top. A crow sitting there in her nest had been hiding from Kosach while he was doing his courting. The crow would have liked to chase Kosach away but was afraid lest the morning frost should chill her eggs. So she settled in her nest to await her mate "more silent than still water, lower than the grass," as the saying is. Suddenly she caught a glimpse of her mate, who had been out on his rounds and was now winging his way home.

"Ca-a-aw!" she cried to him, which being translated means "Help!"

"Ca-a-aw!" her mate flung back in the

direction of the quail as if to say they'd soon see whose feathers would fly.

The crow, taking in the situation at a glance, flew down and alighted on the perch alongside the quail, who was engrossed in his mating song.

Kosach, completely oblivious to the presence of the crow, let out the cry that is well known to all those who hunt birds.

"Kar-kar-keks!"

This was the signal for a general *melée* between all the cock birds. Feathers began to fly in all directions and, as though in response to the same signal, the crow began edging towards Kosach, a hop at a time.

The two children sat motionless as though carved out of the rock on which they were seated. The sun, clear and warm, had come up over the swamp trees opposite them. A solitary cloud appeared in the sky and like a cold blue streak cut the rising sun in halves. Almost simultaneously with the cloud there came a sudden gust of wind, the fir pressed against the pine which leaned on the fir and the fir wailed.

In the meantime, Mitrasha and Nastya had rested themselves on the stone and warmed themselves in the sun. They got up to continue their journey. Right near the Rock the fairly wide path intersecting the swamp forked: one good, solid path bore to the right, the other, a faint narrow track, led straight ahead.

Taking his bearings by the compass, Mitrasha pointed to the smaller.

"That's the way to the north," he said.

"That's not a path!" answered Nastya.

"Nonsense!" said Mitrasha angrily, "people have been that way, of course, it's a path."

Nastya, however, was reluctant to give in to her younger brother.

"Ca-a-aw!" shrilled the crow in her nest.

Her mate was hopping nearer to Kosach the quail.

A second fleck of cloud crossed the face of the sun and the grey morning mist began to lift.

Golden Chick pulled herself together and began to argue with her brother.

"Look how well-worn my path is," she said, "everybody goes that way, how can we be cleverer than everybody else?"

"Let them all go that way if they want to," said the stubborn Little Man. "We've got to follow the compass to the palestinka in the north, the way Father directed us."

"But Father told us fairy tales, he was only teasing us," said Nastya. "I don't suppose there's any palestinka there in the north. We'd be fools to follow that arrow and instead of finding the palestinka, we'd blunder straight into the Blind Yelan."

"All right," and Mitrasha abruptly turned round. "I won't argue any more, you take the path that all the women take for berries, I'll go my own way to the north."

And off he went, without thinking either of the basket for his berries or of the food.

Nastya should have reminded him of the food but she was so angry that she turned red as a beetroot, spat in disgust and set off to look for berries down the well-trodden road.

"Ca-a-aw!" croaked the crow.

The cockbird ran swiftly across the remaining span of the bridge to Kosach and pecked at him might and main. As though he had been scalded, Kosach darted off to join the other quail who had taken to wing, but the infuriated crow gave chase, pulled out a tuft of white and rainbow-hued feathers from Kosach's tail and maintained the chase, even after they were far from the nest.

Then the grey morning mist descended like a thick blanket and completely obscured the sun and its life-giving rays. A gust of wind shook the two trees, their roots intertwined, their branches stabbing each other and they wailed and groaned all over the Bludovo Marshes.

## V

The trees groaned so mournfully that Antipych's retriever Travka crawled out of the half-ruined potato cellar beside the old woodman's cottage and began howling pitifully in tune with the trees.

What induced the dog to crawl out of his warm corner in the cellar so early in the morning and howl in answer to the trees?

What with the cacophony of groans, sighs, moans and howls of the trees it sometimes sounded as though a child had been lost and abandoned in the forest and was whimpering pitifully.

Travka just couldn't stand this whimpering and whenever she heard it she would crawl out of her lair. The crying of the trees intertwined for all eternity, reminding her too strongly of her own sorrow.

Two years had passed since the greatest misfortune of her life had befallen Travka: the forester she adored, the old hunter Antipych, had died.

It was a very long time since we first went hunting with Antipych and the old man himself seemed to have forgotten how old he really was, he just went on living in his forest cottage as though he would never die.

"How old are you, Antipych?" we would ask him. "Eighty?"

"More," he would answer.

"A hundred?"

"Less."

Thinking that he was joking with us and that he knew perfectly well how old he was we would ask him:

"Don't kid us, Antipych, tell the truth, how old are you?"

"I'll tell you truly," answered the old man, "if you first tell me what truth is, what it is like, where it lives and how it is to be found."

It was difficult to answer him.

"Look here, Antipych," we said, "you are older than we are and you probably know better where truth is."

"Yes, I know," Antipych replied with a chuckle.

"Then tell us."

"No, as long as I live I can't say, you must search for it yourselves. When I am dying come and see me, then I'll whisper the whole truth in your ears."

"All right, we'll come, but suppose we can't guess when it's time and you die without us?"



The old man screwed up his eyes in the way he always did when he wanted to make something of somebody.

"You're not such children," he said, "that you couldn't have found out a few things for yourselves but you go around asking questions all the time. When I'm about to die I'll whisper everything to Travka, if you're not here."

"Travka!" he called.

A big, reddish retriever with a black stripe down her back burst into the cottage. Under her eyes were curved black lines, like eyes. They made the dog's eyes seem very big and with them she asked her master: "Why did you call me?"

Antipych looked at the dog in a peculiar kind of way and she seemed to understand him immediately: he had called her just to be friendly, not for anything in particular, but merely to play with her... Travka wagged her tail and began to sink down on her legs, lower and lower and when she had crawled under her master's knees she turned over onto her back and displayed her light-coloured belly with its six pairs of black teats. When Antipych stretched out his hand to stroke her she leapt up and placed her paws on his shoulder and gave him smacking kisses on the nose, cheeks and even on his lips.

"All right, all right," he said, soothing the dog and wiping his face on his sleeve. He stroked her head and continued:

"All right, now get back to your place!"

Travka turned from him and went out.

"There, you see, Travka, a hunter's dog, understands everything at a single word,"

said Antipych. "But you are so dumb you are asking me where truth can be found. All right, come to me and if you're too late I'll whisper everything to Travka."

Antipych died. Then the war began and another forester was sent in his place. The cottage was abandoned; it was very old, old even than Antipych and was held up by struts.

When the cottage no longer had an owner, wind and weather had their own way and the little house soon collapsed. In one year the tall willow-herbs grew up through the beams until the cottage became nothing but a little hillock in a forest clearing covered with red flowers. Travka moved her quarters to the potato cellar and began to live in the forest and off the forest just like all the other animals.

But it was hard for the domesticated Travka to adapt herself to a wild life. She had been content for Antipych, her great and beloved master, and not for herself. Often after catching a hare on the run, she would lie on the ground and wait until Antipych came and then though hungry she would not permit herself to eat the hare. Even if Antipych for one reason or another did not appear she would lift the hare with her teeth, throw her head high so that her booty did not drag on the ground and thus bring it home. Travka worked for Antipych, not for herself. Her master loved her, fed her and protected her from the wolves. Now that Antipych was dead she had to fend for herself like any other forest animal. Sometimes when the hunt was at its height she would forget that she was chasing

a hare merely because she wanted to eat it. On such occasions Travka forgot herself to the extent that when she caught the hare she would take it to Antipych and then, hearing the moaning of the trees, would climb onto the hillock that had once been the cottage and give vent to wild howling...

Grey Landlord, the wolf, had long been listening to this howling.

## VI

Antipych's cottage was quite close to the Dry River whither our group of wolf-hunters went some few years ago in response to a request from the local peasants. Local hunters assured us that a numerous wolf pack frequented the Dry River area. We came to help rid the peasants of the wolves and set about the job according to all the rules of big game hunting.

We moved into the Bludovo Marshes at night and howled after the fashion of wolves in order to draw an answer from the pack frequenting the Dry River. The ruse worked and we discovered the whereabouts and numbers of the pack. The wolves had their retreat on the banks of the Dry River where the tangle of fallen trees and undergrowth were so dense as to be well-nigh impenetrable. For ages the river had been battling against the trees for a free runway and the trees had tried to reinforce the banks. The river won, the trees fell and the river emptied into the swamp. There were many layers of fallen trees and rotting wood. Plants forced their way up through the decaying tree-trunks and long tendrils of the ivy wound around the young aspens. This formed what we hunters call a "strong point" or what one might even call a "wolf's castle".

Having discovered the haunt of the wolves we made a detour of about three kilometres, travelling around the retreat on skis, and all along the ski tracks we attached a pungent red bunting to the branches of the trees. The red colour scares the wolves and the strong smell of bunting makes them even more nervous; a light breeze causing the red bunting to flutter gently adds to the consternation in the wolf mind.

We made as many openings in the circle as there were hunters; at each opening a man waited behind a stout fir-tree.

With shouts, and a banging of clubs against the tree trunks, the beaters aroused the wolves who at first began to move cautiously towards them. Leading the pack came the old she-wolf herself, behind her the cubs and in the rear, slightly to one side of his family, stalked the broad-muzzled, savage old wolf known to the peasants as the "Grey Landlord".

The wolves moved cautiously. The beaters closed in on them. The she-wolf broke into a trot. Suddenly... Flags!

She whirled round and again: Flags!

The beaters closed in, narrowing the circle. The old she-wolf seemed to forget her wolfish instincts and, scurrying about hither and thither, at last found an opening; she was brought down by a bullet in the head right at the very opening, not more than ten paces from the hunter.

The other wolves suffered a like fate but the wily Grey Landlord had been in situations like this before and when he heard the first shot he dashed away through the flags. Two shots were fired after him to help him on his way: one tore off his left ear, the other—half of his tail.

The wolf-pack had been routed but in one summer old Grey Landlord killed as many sheep and cattle as the pack would have done. He would sneak behind thick juniper bushes and wait until the herdsmen moved away or fell asleep. When the moment came he dashed in amongst the animals and would kill sheep or injure cows. In winter, when the herds did not go out to pasture, he rarely had a chance to break into a farmyard to steal sheep. He mostly hunted the village dogs and lived almost entirely on dog meat. He grew so daring that on one occasion he chased a dog running behind her master's sled, drove her into the sled and snatched her, as you might say, out of her master's hands.

Grey Landlord became the terror of the district and once more the peasants came and asked our wolf-hunting brigade to help kill him. We tried five times to flag him but each time he dashed through the flags. At the time of our story, in early spring, after surviving a severe winter of hunger and cold, Grey Landlord was waiting impatiently in his lair until he heard the shepherd's horn again.

On the morning when the children quarrelled and each went a different way, Grey Landlord was lying in his lair, hungry and savage. When the wind brought the morning with it and made the trees by the Recumbent Rock whine and howl, the wolf could stand it no longer and emerged into the open. He stood above the fallen trees with his head up, drew in his scraggy belly, turned his one remaining ear to the wind, straightened his tail stump and howled.

What a melancholy howl that was! If you, a passer-by, should hear such a howl and it should arouse feelings of pity in you, do not trust them: it is not a dog, the friend of man, that is howling, but a wolf, man's mortal enemy. Passer-by, save your pity for one who does not whine and whimper like a wolf but for the dog who has lost his master and whines because he does not know whom to serve.

## VII

The Dry River skirts Bludovo Marshes in a wide curve. On one side of the river a dog is howling, on the other side a wolf. The wind presses against the trees and carries with it the wailing and groaning, not knowing whom it serves; it is all the same to the wind who howls, the tree, the dog—the friend of man—or the wolf, man's enemy; all the wind wants is the howl. The wind treacherously carried to the wolf the howl of the dog that had been abandoned by man. Grey Landlord, distinguishing the living groans of the dog from those of the trees, crawled cautiously out of the tangle of brushwood, and, raising his one ear and sticking his half tail straight out, climbed onto rising ground. From there he ascertained the point from which the howls were coming and with loping strides set out in that direction.

Fortunately for Travka, she was so hungry that she had to cease her pitiful whining or, perhaps, call a new master to her. Perhaps in her dog's imagination Antipych had not died at all but had only turned his face from her. Perhaps she even believed that the whole of mankind was just one big Antipych with many faces. If one of those faces had turned from her, still, perhaps, that same Antipych would call her to another of his faces and she would serve the new one as faithfully as she had the old.

That, most likely, was what was happening: Travka was howling in the hope of evoking a response from Antipych.

The wolf, hearing the dog's prayer to make a sound he hated with all his being, made his way towards her with long easy strides. Travka had only to howl for another five minutes or so and Grey would get her. She was terribly hungry, however, and she stopped calling Antipych and went out to look for a hare's tracks.

At this time of the year, the hare, a nocturnal animal, does not take to rest at the first sign of dawn in order to lie throughout the whole day in fear and trembling and with eyes wide open. In spring the hare wanders about in the broad daylight in fields and on roads. One old hare, after the children had quarrelled, arrived at the place where they had parted and, like them, sat on the Rock to rest and listen. A sudden gust of wind made the trees groan and alarmed him; he jumped from the Recumbent Rock and in great bounds, headed straight towards the Blind Yelan, a place feared by man. He had not finished his spring moulting and in addition to leaving tracks on the ground he left tufts of his winter fur clinging to the wayside bushes.

Although some time had elapsed since the hare left the Recumbent Rock, Travka immediately picked up his trail. But the scent of the two young people on the Rock with their basket smelling of bread and potatoes made her hesitate to follow the hare's scent.

Travka had a difficult proposition to solve: should she follow the scent of the hare which led to the Blind Yelan where one of the two people had also gone or should she follow the human scent to the right along the path that went around the Blind Yelan?

This difficult problem would have been solved very easily had she known which of the two had taken the bread. Travka would be able to eat some of that bread and then begin hunting; she would catch a hare and bring it in, not for herself but for the one who gave her the bread.

Whither should she go? Which path should she follow?

Human beings placed in such a predicament are able to think, but a gun dog under such circumstances begins what hunters call "chopping". Travka began to "chop". She ran as all gun dogs do, in circles, her head erect, sniffing high and low and on all sides her eyes peering intently in all directions.

A gust of wind coming suddenly from the direction in which Nastya had gone brought the dog to a halt. Travka stood still for a moment and even stood up on her hind leg like a hare. . . .



She had done this once before when Antipych was still alive. The forester had some hard work to do preparing a load of firewood for despatch. He left Travka tied up at home so that she would not interfere with him. He went out at dawn and it was not until dinner-time that Travka discovered that her chain was fastened to a hook on the end of a thick rope. Realizing this she climbed up onto the mound of earth that surrounded the base of the cottage, stood on her hind legs and with her forepaws pulled the rope towards her. By evening she had chewed through it. Immediately she was free she ran out with the chain round her neck to seek Antipych. Antipych had been away more than twelve hours, his scent was cold and in addition had been washed away by a drizzle of rain that clung to the ground like dew. The forest had been so calm that not a single leaf had changed place throughout the day and the tiny, strong smelling particles of tobacco smoke from Antipych's pipe remained in the air motionless from morning till night. Realizing at once that she could not find Antipych by following his trail she began "chopping" with her head high in the air; Travka found the streak of air with the tobacco smoke in it and gradually, first losing and again finding the aerial trail, made her way to her master.

That's what had happened before. Now that the wind carried to her the suspicious scent which impinged on her senses she stood stock still and waited. When the wind blew again she stood harelike on her hind legs as she had done before and confirmed her suspicion that the food had gone in that direction with one of the two people. Travka turned to the Recumbent Rock and compared the smell of the basket on the Rock with that brought by the wind. Then she checked the trail of the second person and of the hare. We may suppose that her thoughts were something like this:

"The hare has gone straight to his daytime form, he is somewhere over there near the Blind Yelan where he will spend the day. . . That person with the food may go away. And how can you compare the two?—The work and strain of chasing a hare so as to tear it up and eat it by yourself; or a hunk of bread and a friendly caress from the hand of man and perhaps even find in him Antipych. . . ."

She peered steadily along the straight path to the Blind Yelan and then turned with determination to the path that skirted the Yelan, stood up once more on her hind legs to make absolutely sure, wagged her tail and went off down the path at a quick trot.

### VIII

The Blind Yelan into which the compass needle was leading Mitrasha was a place of great danger, where in the course of centuries many people and still more cattle have perished. Everybody who goes into the Bludovo Marshes should, of course, know just that the Blind Yelan is.

The way we understand it is this: the whole of Bludovo Marshes with their tremendous deposits of peat, are the storehouse of the

sun. The hot sun was, indeed, the mother of every blade of grass, every little flower, every tree and shrub in the swamp. The sun gave to each its warmth and when they died and decayed they passed on a legacy in the form of fertilizer to other plants, bushes, berries, flowers and grasses. The water in the marshes hinders the parent plants from passing on all their qualities to their successors. For thousands of years the residue has been preserved beneath the waters, the swamp has become the storehouse of the sun which is passed on to man in the form of peat.

The Bludovo Marshes contain enormous deposits of peat although the layers are not of equal thickness everywhere. Near the Recumbent Rock where the children had been sitting, layer after layer of decayed vegetable matter had accumulated over thousands of years. This was the oldest peat layer, but farther off, in the vicinity of the Blind Yelan, the peat layer was thinner and younger.

As Mitrasha went on in the direction indicated by the compass and path, the clumps under his feet, instead of just being spongy as before, were now semi-liquid. He seemed to be putting his feet on something solid but they sank into the quagmire in an alarming way. Here and there hummocks slid away from under his feet and he had to pick his way carefully. Sometimes as he stepped there was a gurgling, belching noise which died somewhere under the swamp.

The ground underfoot was already like a hammock hanging over a gulf of slime. On this quaky surface, on this thin layer of intertwined roots and stems there were occasional stunted fir-trees. The sour soil of the swamp would not allow them to grow and they had stood there, puny little things, for a hundred years or more. . . The old firs in the swamp are not like those of the forest, all alike, tall and stately, tree matching tree, column resembling column, candle to candle. The older they are the stranger they seem to get. There is one with a dry branch like a hand held up to grab you as you pass, another that holds a stick in her hand, waiting to hit you; the third has sat down for some reason or another, the fourth is standing knitting a stocking; it is the same with all of them, every stunted fir-tree in the swamp resembles something or other.

The crust under Mitrasha's feet got thinner and thinner but the plants seemed strongly intertwined and supported him all right; making everything around him quake and quiver, he went on and on. There was nothing for Mitrasha to do but to trust the man who must have gone before him and left a path for others to follow.

The fir-trees, the old women of the swamp, were greatly troubled as they allowed the intruder to pass, the boy with the long shotgun and the double-peaked cap. One of them would suddenly spring up as though she wanted to hit the bold little fellow over the head with her stick and hide all the other old women behind her. Then she would drop back and another witch would stretch out her bony arm across the path. One would expect at any moment to see a forest clearing ahead as in the fairy tales, with the witch's

cottage in the middle and skulls on stakes around it. At every step now a gurgling and belching was heard in the ground.

Suddenly, low over the boy's head appeared a black, tufted head and the peewit with her round black wings and white underwings, who had been disturbed in her nest, screamed shrilly:

"Chee vee? Chee vee?" (Russian—Whose boy are you?)

"Live, live," came the cry, seemingly in answer to the peewit, from a long-billed snipe.

A black raven keeping watch over his nest made a circular flight round the swamp and saw the boy with the double-peaked cap. In the spring the raven croaks in a different way: his cry sounds like "Drong-tong" pronounced as a man might pronounce it gutturally and through the nose. There are shades of meaning, incomprehensible and elusive to our ears, in the main sounds so that we cannot understand the conversation of the ravens, but can only guess what they are saying.

"Drong-tong!" croaked the raven watchman, suggesting that a little man with a double-peaked cap and a long gun was approaching the Blind Yelan and that there would soon be something to eat.

"Drong-tong!" answered the hen bird in her nest and she implied: "I hear and am waiting!"

The magpies, close relatives of the ravens, heard the cross talk of the latter and chattered away. Even the vixen returning from an unsuccessful prowl pricked up her ears at the cry of the ravens.

Mitrasha, who heard all this, wasn't the least bit perturbed: what was there to be afraid of as long as he stuck to the path? Somebody had gone this way before, so why shouldn't he go boldly forward. When he heard the raven he even began to sing:

Oh, raven, don't you fly around,  
Up there above my head.

The sound of his own voice increased his courage and he even considered shortening the difficult journey along the path. As he looked down at his feet he noticed that as his foot sank into the mud it left a track which immediately filled with water. Everybody who had walked along the path squeezed the water out of the moss and the ground beneath it so that there was a drier ridge on either side of the stream which formed in the path; on these ridges grew the tall sweet, light-coloured grass which the Russians call "whitebeard". As this grass had none of the yellow colour that predominated in the marshes in spring, but was nearly white, it was possible to see for a long way ahead where the path led. Mitrasha noticed that it turned sharply to the left and then carried on until it disappeared in the distance. He checked up by the compass: the needle pointed north, the path led to the west.

"Chee vee?" the peewit asked at that moment.

"Live, live," answered the snipe.

"Drong-tong," croaked the raven with even greater confidence.

The magpies hopping about in the fir-trees maintained a ceaseless chattering.

Taking a good look round, Mitrasha saw before him a clearing in which the hummocks gradually grew lower and lower until they merged into what appeared to be level ground. The most important thing was that he noticed on the far side of the clearing a snaky line of "whitebeard", a sure sign of a well-trodden path. Sensing from the direction of the "whitebeard", that the path did not go straight to the north, Mitrasha thought: "Now why should I turn left and go over the hummocks, when there's a path just across that clearing?"

And without any more ado he set out boldly across the fresh, clean meadow-like clearing.

\* \* \*

"Oh, you people," Antipych had once said to us when we returned from an expedition to the swamp, wet and muddy. "You go out with your clothes and boots on."

"And how should we go?" we asked.

"You should go naked and without boots."

"Naked and without boots?"

But Antipych simply laughed at us. At that time we did not know what the old man was laughing at.

It is only now, many years later, that his words have come to have a meaning for us. Antipych had said that to us when we were still boys, boldly and confidently talking of things we had not experienced. When Antipych suggested that we go out naked and without boots he did not add:

"Don't jump into the river unless you know the ford."

\* \* \*

Well, there was Mitrasha. Sensible little Nastya had warned him. The whitebeard grass showed him the way round the Yelan. But no! He didn't know where the ford was but leaving the path trodden by older hunters blundered straight into the treacherous Blind Yelan. This was the very place where the plants no longer intertwined; it was like a hole in the middle of a frozen pond. Usually at least a little water is visible on the surface of a Yelan which is covered with big white globe flowers and water lilies. This particular Yelan was called the Blind because there was no way of discerning it.

At first it was easier going for Mitrasha in the Yelan than it had been on the path. His feet sank gradually, however, and it became more and more difficult to extract them. The elk has an easy time in such a place, he has immense strength and the advantages of long legs; he doesn't have to think where he is going but travels just as easily at top speed through forest or swamp. Mitrasha, however, sensing the danger, stopped to consider his situation. A second later he had sunk to his knees and was sinking deeper. He could still, with an effort, get back the way he had come. He thought of turning round, of laying the gun on the swamp and, by leaning on it, pull himself out. But

<sup>1</sup> A Russian proverb.



quite close to him, right there in front was the high white grass of the path.

"I'll make it," he said.

He dragged himself on.

Now it was too late. Like a wounded man whose only thought was not to give in, Mitrasha made one desperate effort after another. He felt himself gripped on all sides, chest steep in the quagmire. It was now dangerous even to breathe for the slightest movement dragged him down deeper. There was only one thing left to do—unsling his gun, lay it flat on the surface, and pressing on it with both his hands rest until his breathing became calmer.

A sudden gust of wind brought Nastya's shouts to him.

"Mitrasha!"

He responded with an answering shout.

But the wind was blowing from Nastya's direction and carried his answers westward across the Bludovo Marshes to where there was nothing but the endless fir-trees. Only the magpies responded to his cries as they flew from tree to tree and with their usual chattering gradually surrounded the Blind Yelan; they perched there on gaunt branches—thin, long-billed, long-tailed birds who chattered constantly.

"Dree-tee-ta," said some of them.

"Dree-ta-ta," said the others.

"Drong-tong," screamed the raven overhead.

For an instant the raven folded his noisy wings and swooped down, opening them again almost over the boy's head.

The little fellow was afraid even to show his gun to this black messenger who heralded his death.

The magpies, clever birds where anything is concerned, noted the complete impotence of the little man floundering in the swamp. They hopped down from the higher to the lower branches of the firs, then alighted on the surface of the marsh, and in short order began their offensive.

The little man with the double-peaked cap ceased shouting.

Tears streamed down his sun-tanned cheeks.

## IX

If you have never seen cranberries in their native state, you may wander through the swamps for a long time before you realize that you are walking on them. Take the huckleberry for example: it grows and you can see it: a long thin stem shoots straight up with little green leaves like wings on all sides of it and at the base of the leaves grow the tiny berries, black fruit with a bluish down on them. Then there is the blood-red whortleberry with hard, dark green leaves that never turn yellow even under the snow and which have so many berries on them that the whole place seems to be spotted with blood. There are also the blueberries or marsh whortleberries. They are big berries and grow on bushes so that you cannot miss them as you pass. In the dense thickets where the grouse live, there is a ruby-red berry with a stone, each little berry in its own green cup. The only berry in all Russia that hides itself is the cranber-

ry, the klyukva, which, especially in spring, hides in the hummocks in the swamps and is scarcely visible from above. When there are a lot of them together you can see them fairly easily and you think: "Somebody has spilled cranberries." You stoop down to pick up one and instead of one berry you pull up a long green string with dozens of berries on it.

Either because they are dear in spring-time or because they are highly nutritious and go down well with tea, the country women betray a remarkable greediness in gathering them. There was one old lady who gathered such an enormous basketload of them that she couldn't lift it. Since she couldn't bring herself either to tip out some of the berries or abandon the basket altogether, she just lay down and died beside her full basket. They sold well and the only good thing that came out of her greediness was that when the berries were sold there was something with which to remember her.

It also happens that one woman spotting a rich berry-ground, takes a look round to see whether anybody else is in her tracks, falls to the wet marshy ground and crawls over it like a greedy snake. She crawls and keeps on crawling oblivious to the fact that another, not at all like a human being in appearance is crawling towards her. Woman meets woman in the berry-ground and—they quarrel.

At first Nastya picked single berries, bending down for each of them separately. But she quickly tired of bending down for every little berry, she wanted more.

She found out where she could find strings of them and not just one or two and bent down to pick a handful at a time.

At home Nastya could not work a single hour without thinking of her brother and wanting to see him. Now he had gone alone she knew not where and she did not even remember that she had the food and her darling brother was wandering there somewhere hungry in the swamp. She became oblivious to everything but the berries, she wanted more and more of them.

Why had she quarrelled with Mitrasha? Simply because she wanted to follow the beaten track. Now that she was chasing the berries, searching for them everywhere and going wherever they led her, Nastya, too, wandered from the beaten track without realizing it. There was only one occasion on which she seemed to awaken from her greediness: she suddenly realized that she had wandered from the path. She turned in the direction in which she believed the path to be but there was none there. She turned in the other direction where two dead trees with withered branches stood up like beacons—again there was no path to be seen. Now she remembered Mitrasha's compass; remembered her brother, her darling, perhaps hungry now—she shouted to him. . . .

She had only just remembered when she saw something that very few berry-pickers ever see.

When they quarrelled there was one thing the children did not know: that both paths, the narrow and the wide, led round the Blind Yelan and united at the Dry River, whence

the single tract led to the Pereslavl Highway. Nastya's path skirted the Blind Yelan in a wide semi-circle. Mitrasha's path went more direct along the very edge of the Yelan. If he had not blundered, had he followed the whitebeard grass which marked the path he would long before have been at the point which Nastya had just reached. Hidden amongst the shrubs and junipers, was that very palestinka towards which Mitrasha was going by compass.

Supposing Mitrasha had got there hungry, without the basket, what would he have been able to do on that blood-red palestinka?

Nastya arrived at the palestinka with the basket of food forgotten and covered with berries.

Again the little girl who resembled a Golden Chick on Long Legs should have remembered her brother on seeing the palestinka and should have shouted:

"Mitrasha, we've found it."

Oh, raven, raven, you bird of ill omen! You live, maybe, for three hundred years and the mother bird who hatched you whispered to you in the egg all that she had seen in her three hundred years of life. In this way from raven to raven the history of everything that had happened in the marshes for a thousand years was passed on. How much you have seen and know, raven, why don't you just for once get outside your raven's kingdom, and bring the sister news of her brother, sinking in the swamp because of his desperate boldness?

You could tell him, raven. . . .

"Drong-tong!" croaked the raven flying round the head of the sinking boy.

"I hear," cried the hen bird from her nest with the same "drong-tong". "Hurry up, grab something before the swamp swallows him up."

"Drong-tong," repeated the cockbird, circling over the head of the girl who was crawling over the swamp almost within reach of her dying brother. This "drong-tong" probably meant that the raven family would no doubt get more from the crawling girl than from the boy sinking in the swamp.

There were no cranberries in the centre of the palestinka. But there was a dense grove of aspens on a little eminence and amongst the trees was a giant elk. If you looked at him from one side you thought he resembled a bull. From the other he seemed just like a horse; you saw his shapely body, his long, muscular legs, his muzzle and what horns, what eyes! You looked at him and you got the idea that there was nothing, no bull, no horse, but some sort of big shadow, something grey. But how can the monster be part of the aspen grove when we see him place his huge jaws to the tender bark of a slender tree and when he takes them away again a white strip appears on the tree trunk? That is how the monster feeds. He leaves his mark on all the trees. This huge animal is not a spectre in the swamp. It is difficult to imagine that this enormous beast could grow up on such feed as that afforded by aspen bark and swamp plants. Why is man with all his powers greedy even for the tiny cranberries? The huge elk, devouring the aspen bark, looked down on the crawling girl as he would on any other crawling thing. Blind to everything save her cranberries the girl slowly crawled towards a blackened tree stump. The former Golden

Chick of the Long Legs could scarcely lift her basket laden as it was with crimson berries and she crawled on, wet and muddy.

The elk did not regard her as a human being, her gait was that of the little animals that he regarded with the same indifference as we would a stone.

The blackened tree stump attracted the sun's rays and had grown very warm. Evening was drawing in and the air was growing colder. The stump, however, black and round, retained its warmth. A swarm of tiny lizards crawled out of the swamp and hugged the warmth; four yellow butterflies folded their wings and held on with their antennae; huge black flies came to spend the night there. A long cranberry plant, clinging to grass stems and irregularities in the stump, entwined itself around it several times and then went wandering away the other side. The poisonous viper seeks warmth at this time of the year; one of them, fully half a yard long, had crawled to the stump and coiled itself up on the cranberries.

The girl was also creeping across the swamp without raising her head. She drew nearer to the warm stump and pulled at the cranberry plant around which the viper was coiled. The reptile raised its head and hissed. The girl also raised her head. . . .

Nastya, jolted to her senses, jumped up. The elk, realizing that this tiny figure was a human being, plunged out of the grove and scampered away on his long stilt-like legs over the swamp with the agility of a hare running over a firm sward.

Scared by the elk Nastya gazed in astonishment at the snake; the viper was lying coiled up as before, basking in the warm rays of the declining sun. Nastya imagined that it was she lying on the tree stump and that she had come out of her snakeskin and was standing there, not knowing where she was.

Standing nearby and watching Nastya, was a big reddish dog with a black stripe down its back. The dog was Travka and Nastya remembered her for Antipych had often taken her into the village. True, she could not remember the dog's name and called: "Muravka, Muravka, I'll give you a piece of bread."

She reached out for the basket. But the basket was filled to overflowing with berries and the bread lay beneath them. How much time had passed, how many cranberry vines had been stripped to fill that enormous basket! Where was Mitrasha all this time, he was hungry and she had clean forgotten him just as she had forgotten herself and everything else around her.

Again she looked at the stump where the snake was lying, and suddenly she let out a piercing shriek:

"Mitrasha!"

Sobbing, she fell beside the berry basket. It was this shrill cry that reached the boy in the Yelan. Mitrasha heard it and replied, but the wind carried his voice in the opposite direction, where only the magpies lived.

## X

That strong gust of wind which blew when Nastya shouted was not the last breath of the evening. At that time the sun was sinking



through a dense bank of cloud and from the cloud the golden feet of the sun's throne shot out and rested on the earth.

Nor was it the last breath of wind that blew when Mitrasha shouted in answer to Nastya.

The last gust of wind came when the sun seemed to have planted the golden feet of its throne into the ground and his big, clean lower edge was touching the earth. It was then that the little thrush on dry land lilted his sweet little song. In a subdued way, Kosach the quail was warbling his mating song from the topmost branch of the now still trees beside the Recumbent Rock. The herons were no longer chanting "victory, victory," as they did in the morning but their triple cry seemed to say: "Sleep, sleep, but remember we'll soon wake you, wake you, wake you."

The day ended with a gust of wind and a last deep breath. Then complete silence fell and the slightest sound could be heard, even the little partridges whistling in the rushes beside the Dry River.

Travka, her instinct telling her that a human being was in trouble, trotted over to the sobbing Nastya and licked the salt tears from her cheeks. Nastya raised her head, glanced at the dog, and without uttering a murmur dropped her head again and allowed it to sink on the berries. Travka could smell the bread through the berries but although she wasravenously hungry, she would not under any circumstances permit herself to touch the berries with her paws. Instead, realizing that this was a human being in trouble she raised her head and howled.

I remember that one evening we were travelling in an old-fashioned three-horse sleigh with bells. Suddenly the coachman stopped his horses, the bells were silent and listening attentively the coachman said:

"Trouble."

We could hear a faint sound of wailing.

"What is it?"

"Trouble of some sort, it's a dog howling in the forest."

We did not establish what the trouble was there. Perhaps a man had also got sucked into a swamp somewhere and there was a dog with him, the true friend of man.

In the dead silence when Travka howled, the Grey Landlord's instinct told him that the dog was in the palestinka and made his way there at top speed.

When Travka suddenly ceased her howling, the wolf stood still waiting for it to begin again.

Travka's ears had registered a faint but familiar sound coming from the direction of the Recumbent Rock.

"Tyaff, tyaff," barked the voice.

Travka knew of course that this was the call of a fox giving chase to a hare. She realized too that the Reynard had found the scent of that same hare that she herself had trailed near the Recumbent Rock. She also knew that without resort to cunning a fox can never overtake a hare and that the barking was a sly trick designed to keep the hare on the run until it was exhausted and then, when it was tired and paused for a rest, the wily fox would pounce on it as it lay. Travka had experienced this several times since she had hunted hares for her own food now that Antipych was

gone. And whenever she heard a fox barking like that, she adopted the wolf's tactics; the hunting wolf makes a circle and waiting for the dog that is so zealously chasing a hare, pounces on the dog—so Travka, waiting in the path of the fox, would catch the hare.

As Travka listened to the running fox she knew, as we hunters know, the circle around which the hare was running; from the Recumbent Rock the hare sped to the Blind Yelan and thence to the Dry River; from here it would double in a semi-circle to the palestinka and back again to the Recumbent Rock. Travka sensing this, ran to the Recumbent Rock and lay in ambush there screened by a thick juniper bush.

Travka didn't have to wait very long. Her keen aural sense picked up the padding of the hare's paws as it splashed through the puddle in the pathway intersecting the swamp, a sound inaudible to human ear. These puddles had formed in the footprints that Nastya had made in the morning. The hare would show up in a moment at the Recumbent Rock.

Travka crouched behind the juniper, her hind legs hugging the ground in readiness for the mighty leap which she took as soon as the hare bore in sight.

The hare, old and biggish, swaying slightly as he ran, selected this particular moment to stop dead in his tracks and rising on his hind legs, listened to the barking of the fox to judge the distance between them.

Both actions took place simultaneously—Travka leaped and the hare suddenly stopped.

Travka bounded right over the hare and by the time she had recovered from the leap, the hare was tearing away down Mitrasha's path in great leaps and bounds heading straight for the Blind Yelan.

Travka's wolf hunting tactics failed her this time; the return of the hare was not to be expected before the onset of darkness. So Travka returned to her dog hunting methods and giving chase to the hare, filled the evening air with her regular yelping.

Reynard the fox relinquished the hunt immediately he heard the dog and went back to his usual mouse hunt. Grey Landlord, hearing at last the barking of the dog he had so long and patiently awaited, set out at a fast lope towards the Blind Yelan.

## XI

The magpies at the Blind Yelan split into two parties when they heard the hare approaching: one party hovered over the boy caught in the swamp and screamed:

"Dree-tee-tee."

The others screamed at the hare:

"Dra-ta-ta."

It is difficult to interpret these sounds of magpie alarm. It might be thought that they were sending out a call for help? What help was there to be had? If a man or a dog responded to the magpies' call, the birds had nothing to gain. Maybe they were summoning the whole magpie tribe to a bloody feast? Who knows!

"Dree-tee-tee!" screamed the magpies, hopping closer and closer to the boy. They could

not get close enough because the boy's hands were still free. Suddenly the magpies got mixed up in their chorus, the selfsame birds sang the "ee" song and the "a" song.

This meant that the hare was approaching the Blind Yelan.

This same old hare who had given Travka the slip more than once, knew that a hunting dog was chasing him; and this meant that he had to deploy all his cunning. So he stopped suddenly, right in front of the Yelan and alarmed the magpies before he reached the place where the boy was held fast. The birds scattered and, alighting in the topmost branches of the fir-trees, screamed at the hare.

"Dree-ta-ta!"

Hares do not pay any attention to the scolding of the magpies and make their twists and turns regardless of chattering birds. That is why we sometimes think that this magpie chatter is of no significance and that the birds are like people who simply gossip in order to pass the time.

The hare stood still for a split second, then made his first big bound—Russian hunters call it "giving discount"—away to the side; pausing for a second, he bounded again in the opposite direction then, after a dozen or so of lesser jumps and twists, he came to a stand-still, rested on his haunches and turned in the direction whence he had come just in case Travka should have guessed what "discount he had given."

Of course the hare is very, very wise but these "discounts" are dangerous; an experienced hunting dog knows that a hare always doubles in its tracks and so tries to get the direction of the "discounts" by scent and not from the tracks.

The tiny heart of the hare beats faster when the dog stops barking for he knows that his enemy has begun "chopping" to smell him out and is marking the terrible circle in silence. . . .

This time the hare had luck; he realized that when the dog began circling the Yelan he had come up against something there, for the hare suddenly heard a human voice and immediately afterwards, a terrific noise. . . .

We may guess that the hare, hearing this incomprehensible noise, said to himself something like "better go while the going's good!" and, presto, scuttled quietly away, doubling back on his tracks to the Recumbent Rock.

Travka, describing her circle around the Yelan in pursuit of the hare, suddenly found herself face to face with a human being not ten paces from her; she stopped stock still as though rooted to the ground.

It is easy to guess what Travka thought as she gazed at the figure of the boy in the Yelan. To any of us, all people are different. To Travka all human beings resolved into just two people: one was Antipych with a number of different faces, the other was Antipych's enemy. The wise, intelligent dog did not go up to the boy at once, but stopped to find out whether this was her master or her master's enemy.

Travka stood and stared straight into the face of the boy, a face that was lit up with the last rays of the declining sun.

The boy's eyes were at first dull, dead, but suddenly there was a flash of fire in them

which was not lost on the alert Travka. "Most likely that's Antipych," thought the dog.

She wagged her tail slightly, so slight that it was barely noticeable.

We cannot, of course, know exactly what flashed through Travka's brain when she recognized her Antipych, but we can guess. You, perhaps, picture it yourself. You bend over the still pool of a stream in the forest and you see the reflection of a man, the big handsome man that seemed to Travka to be Antipych, who is leaning over your back and is also looking into the mirror-like surface of the water. And how splendid he looks against nature's background, with the clouds and the trees, and the sun sinking below the horizon and the young horn of the moon just peering through and tiny stars twinkling everywhere.

So it probably was in Travka's case, she saw Antipych mirrored in every human being's face and would have thrown herself on his shoulders only her instinct warned her that there was also Antipych's enemy with exactly the same face.

She hesitated.

Her feet, in the meantime, also began to sink into the quagmire; if she waited any longer her paws would have been sucked down so that she could not drag them out again. She could not wait any longer, she must act.

Neither thunder nor lightning, neither sunrise with all its sounds of victory nor sundown with the herons promising another and glorious day, nothing, none of nature's wonders, could have wrought a greater change in Travka's mind than that which happened there in the swamp: she heard a human word—and what a word!

Antipych, like a real hunter, had first named his dog after the sportsman's cry "travit" which in English translation means "get it"; at first the dog had been called Zatravka but on the lips of the sportsmen this was abbreviated to Travka, a splendid name for a dog. The last time Antipych had visited our village he had still called his dog Zatravka. When the fire flashed in the boy's eyes that meant that Mitrasha had recalled the dog's name. The dead, bluish lips became infused with blood, they grew red and moved. Travka noticed this movement of the lips and for a second time gave her tail a slight wag. It was then that the greatest miracle in Travka's memory occurred. Just as old Antipych had called her in the very first days of their acquaintance, the new young little Antipych called affectionately: "Zatravka!"

Recognizing Antipych, Travka lay down for a moment.

"Here, here," said her new Antipych, "come here you, darling."

Responding to human speech Travka slowly crawled forward.

The little fellow had not called her just for the sheer pleasure of doing so, as Travka most probably thought. The boy's words expressed not only friendship and indescribable joy, as Travka thought, they also contained the germ of a plan for his salvation. If he could have told her exactly what his plan was in words that she could understand, how delighted she would have been. He could not



make himself intelligible to her, however, and had to deceive her with kind words. He also wanted her to be a bit dubious about him, for had she not been, had she not experienced a feeling of fear of this great Antipych and had bounded at once onto his shoulders, the quagmire would inevitably have dragged the little fellow and his canine friend down into its lowest depths. The little man could not at the moment be that great being which Travka visualized. The little fellow was forced to use guile.

"Zatravka, Zatravushka," he called tenderly.

To himself he thought: "Crawl, come on, crawl."

The dog with her clean conscience suspected something not quite pure in the clear voice of her Antipych and crawled forward cautiously.

"Come on, darling, closer, closer!"

To himself he thought: "Crawl, come on, crawl."

Travka advanced a little closer. By leaning on the gun the boy could now have stretched out his hand and by leaning forward have stroked her head. Mitrasha, however, had the sense to realize that the slightest sign of affection on his part would bring the dog bounding to his shoulders and then all would be lost.

He had perfect control of himself, and kept perfectly still, like a soldier awaiting the outcome of a certain blow in battle—would he live or die?

Another short movement and the dog would be on top of him but the boy made no mistake in his calculations; in an instant he lunged forward and seized the strong dog by her near hind leg.

The suddenness of the action electrified Travka. She imagined she had been cruelly deceived.

Travka struggled savagely to tear herself away and would have freed herself from the boy's grip had her struggles not dragged him sufficiently clear of the mud to seize her free leg with his other hand. In an instant Mitrasha was lying with his stomach on the gun; he released Travka and crawled forward on all fours like a dog himself, all the time placing the gun in front of him for support. He continued on until he reached the well-trodden path where man's feet had caused the "whitebeard" grass to grow. Upon gaining the path, he picked up, wiped the last tears from his cheek, shook the mud from his rags and feeling himself a real, big man shouted authoritatively:

"Zatravka! Come here!"

Hearing this voice and these words Travka's tears forsook her; before her stood the former, splendid Antipych. With a whimper of delight she recognized her master, leaped on his neck and the big man showered his friend with kisses on the nose, eyes and ears.

The time has now come to say what we ourselves think about the mysterious words of our old forester Antipych when he promised us that he would whisper the whole truth to the dog if we failed to find him alive again. We believe that Antipych was not merely joking when he said that. It may be that An-

tipych, as Travka understood him, or all mankind, as we would say, had, in the days of long ago, whispered to his friend the dog the whole of the great truth of mankind.

## XII

Little remains to be told of the events of that great day in the Bludovo Marshes. The day, however long as it may have been, was still not ended when Mitrasha, with the aid of Travka, dragged himself out of the Yelan. After the paeans of joy upon discovering her long lost Antipych, the businesslike Travka remembered her interrupted chase of the hare. Travka of course was a gun dog, and her business was to hunt and sometimes overtake a hare for her master. It was hard for her to hunt for herself but it was a pleasure to hunt and catch hares for her master, Antipych. When she recognized Antipych in the figure of Mitrasha she continued the circle that she had been "chopping", soon picked up the scent and went away barking on this fresh trail. The famished Mitrasha realized that his salvation was in that hare, for if Travka caught her he could start fire with a shot as he had seen his father do and roast the hare in the hot ashes. He looked at his gun, changed the wet cartridges and took cover behind a juniper on the circle the hare would make.

It was still light enough to sight the gun when Travka turned the hare from the Recumbent Rock onto Nastya's wide path and drove it to the palestinka, driving it from there towards the juniper bush where Mitrasha lay waiting. It happened, however, that Grey Landlord, hearing the barking renewed, selected for his ambush that very juniper behind which the boy had taken up his position, and the two hunters, man and his mortal enemy, met. . . Seeing the grey muzzle some five paces from him, Mitrasha forgot the hare and fired pointblank at the wolf.

Grey Landlord died easily, without pain.

The chase of course was again interrupted by that shot but this time Travka remained on the job. Best of all was neither hare nor wolf but the fact that Nastya, hearing the shot fired close by, called out. Mitrasha heard her, answered, and Nastya rushed to him immediately. Shortly afterwards Travka came trotting in and deposited the hare at the feet of her young master Antipych. Mitrasha got a fire going, brother and sister warmed themselves and Nastya prepared a meal and a place to sleep.

\* \* \*

Nastya and Mitrasha lived next door but one to us and next morning when their hungry livestock began to make a stir in the yard we were the first to go and see what trouble had befallen the children. We immediately saw that the children had not been home that night and concluded that they had most likely lost their way in the marshes. Gradually other neighbours gathered and we began thinking of organizing a search party. We had just decided to spread out across the swamp in all directions when the two cranberry hunters came marching out of the forest, a heavy basket slung on a pole between them

and trotting along beside them Travka, Antipych's dog.

They told us in detail about their experience in Bludovo Marshes. We believed what they told us; they had the evidence of a basket of berries such as had never been seen before. Not everybody, however, could believe that an eleven-year-old boy could kill an old and cunning wolf. Several of the men who credited Mitrasha's story went out with ropes and sled to the place he told them of and returned with the carcass of Grey Landlord. All the villagers stopped work and gathered to see it, and people not only from our village but from other villages as well came to see Grey Landlord. How many cattle had that old wolf killed in his time! It is difficult to say whom they looked at most, the wolf or the hunter in the double-peaked cap.

They laughed at him, teased him: "There's the Little Man for you!" they said when they could take their eyes off the wolf.

"There was a little man, but he's gone," answered the others.

"He has got ahead of everybody: he's not a 'Little Man' any more, he's a hero."

Almost imperceptibly the Little Man changed and in the next two years of the war grew up into a tall, smart manly young fellow.

The Golden Chick also surprised everybody in the village. Nobody accused her of greediness; on the contrary everybody praised her for having wisely advised her brother to travel the well-worn path and because she had gathered so many cranberries. When the Home for Children evacuated from besieged Leningrad appealed to the village to give what help they could for sick children, Nastya gave them all her fine berries. It was then that we, having won the girl's confidence, knew what a struggle she had had with herself because of her greediness.

Now we must say a few words about ourselves, who we are and what we were doing in the Bludovo Marshes. We are surveyors of the national wealth deposited in the swamps. Since the beginning of the war we had been exploring and surveying and making preparations to obtain peat as fuel. We established that there was enough peat in those marshes to keep a big factory going for a hundred years. This is the kind of treasure that is hidden in our marshes although many people still think that this great Storehouse of the Sun is a place where only devils have their abode; that's all nonsense, there are no devils in the swamps.

*Translated by George Hanna*



# BOOKS AND WRITERS

## ON THE TENDENTIOUS IN LITERATURE

Tendentiousness in literature is by no means a purely academic question. It is a subject that engages the attention of many writers and critics and is of significance to the solution of a number of problems in creative art. It involves the nature of art, the subject that must choose and the vehicles of their expression. There are writers and critics who hold that art must be "free", and "pure", that it must serve to express the feelings of the author and be a conglomerate of esthetically beautiful forms. There is another view which insists that while art must strive to mirror beauty in art forms, it cannot hold itself aloof from life; that its subject must be the thoughts and feelings that actuate the millions. This latter view is very often labelled "tendentious", for it leads to the expression of a definite tendency in art, to the assertion of ethical and moral ideals or the advocacy of definite social principles.

Writers who adhere to this view are subjected to heavy fire from the champions of "pure" art. And Soviet literature in particular, is often accused of social tendentiousness—in the eyes of some critics abroad this tendency is regarded as a cardinal defect in Soviet literature. This is the opinion expressed by the Russian emigré, Gleb Struve, in his book, *25 Years of Soviet Literature*, and by Yanko Lavrin in his *Introduction to the Russian Novel*. The *Times Literary Supplement* joins the chorus in numerous book reviews and we find it in criticisms written by Bowra. Shimanski, editor of *Transformation*, is particularly persistent in charging Soviet literature with tendentiousness. As we examine the writings of these men, we are led to the conclusion that, notwithstanding the individual differences of the authors and their varying views on many questions, the attack here is based on a definite criterion, stemming from the esthetics of philosophical idealism. This makes it impossible to discuss the present matter without examining the general principles of literature.

One of the current beliefs is that art has no aim other than beauty of form. This opinion was held by Théophile Gautier, who lauds Baudelaire for upholding the "absolute autonomy of art" and for denying that poetry can have any aim outside itself or any mission save to engender in the soul of the reader "a perception of the beautiful in the absolute sense of the word." The source of this viewpoint is philosophical idealism, particularly the esthetics of Kant, who asserted that the basis of esthetic feeling is an unbiased delight in pure form.

Gautier held that true poetry not only proves nothing, but that it has not even a story to relate; that the beauty of a poem lies in its music and rhythm, rather than in its con-

tent. This view means that any work of art expressing an idea is tendentious. Gautier advocated "pure" art, and the opponents of tendentiousness today are still the adherents of "art for art's sake".

Now, I am one of those who emphatically deny the existence of "pure" art; pure art has never actually existed. Any work of art always tells a story or describes something. Its materials are either the external world of the artist or his inner experience; whatever the artist's subject, he must reflect things as they appear to him. Further, if the prose-writer's or poet's description coincides with our own conceptions of things, we call him an objective writer. If his description differs from our conceptions, we call him subjective. In either case, we are dealing with an artist who has his own views on world phenomena, nor can this be otherwise. The writer must have his own measure by which he appraises the world about him.

Balzac writes in the preface to the *Human Comedy* as follows: "The writer's law is that which makes him what he is, what makes him—I make bold to say—equal to the statesman and perhaps above him. The law is his judgement in problems of human life and his steadfast adherence to principle." Balzac quotes Bonald, who wrote: "The writer must have definite views on morals and on politics; he must look upon himself as an educator." The author of the *Human Comedy* goes on to say of himself: "I early took these words, which constitute a law for the monarchistic as well as the democratic writer, as my rule."

Leo Tolstoy held, in the main, the same view. In 1908 Tolstoy wrote to Leonid Andreyev: "I believe that one should write only when the thought that one wishes to express becomes so persistent that it refuses to leave the mind until it is put down as best the writer can." Tolstoy, like Balzac, felt that literary creation is definitely connected with the expression of certain definite ideas.

The standpoint of these two writers is of the highest value, for it expresses the views on the nature of art of two of the greatest literary masters of modern times. If any adherent of pure art should declare that it is the Marxists alone who demand tendentiousness in art, they must first consider the opinion of these writers, who cannot be accused of being Marxists, and whose right to express views on the nature of art cannot be questioned.

It may be argued that Balzac's and Tolstoy's views hold good only for their own compositions and for those of their followers. But what about those writers who consciously deny not only tendentiousness, but all content as well?

Théophile Gautier once said: "I should be happy to forswear my rights as a Frenchman and a citizen, could I but look at a painting by Raphael or at a nude beauty." Gautier is not without disciples among modern poets and critics. The political indifference of these people also constitutes a definite tendency, even though they may be bitterly opposed to tendentiousness.

This tendency may be defined more precisely. Plekhanov<sup>1</sup> in one of his articles, pointed out that the art for art's sake argument appears whenever there arises an inability on the part of the artist to approve of the social milieu in which he finds himself. In an article entitled *Art and Social Life*, Plekhanov described the romanticism of the first half of the 19th century as an esthetic protest against bourgeois society.

The modern esthetes are likewise dissatisfied with their milieu. But their dissatisfaction with the modern way of life, like that of the majority of the romantics, is accompanied by a negative attitude towards the socialist thesis concerning the necessity of changing the social system. Like the romantics, the modern esthetes would like to change the social conditions in which they find themselves without changing the social system. Hence the denial on the part of such poets and writers of social subjects in art and their preoccupation with psychological problems and questions of art forms. The denial of social subjects forms a clearly defined tendency followed by this school. In the final analysis writers and critics who take up the cudgels against tendentiousness are themselves caught fast in the toils of a definite tendency.

## 2

It is Soviet literature in particular that is accused of tendentiousness. There are critics who go farther and declare that tendentiousness is a quality inherent in Russian literature. In my opinion, if we were to think of tendentiousness as it has been defined above, we would have little difficulty in proving that all English literature, both classical and modern, is definitely tendentious. There is no need to dig up the ancient past to prove this. We can take Shakespeare himself. To say nothing of the fact that Shakespeare's art as a whole is the expression of the current which has come to be called Renaissance humanism, it should be clear to anyone that the chronicles are not only tendentious, but that they are direct political propaganda. Think how many times during the war the lines of Falconbridge were quoted:

This England never did, nor never shall,  
Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror . . .

Come the three corners of the world in arms,  
And we shall shock them. Nought shall  
make us rue,

If England to itself do rest but true.

Recall too, Wilson Knight's *The Olive and the Sword*, published in 1944 and proving the

patriotic propagandist nature of a number of Shakespeare's works.

Ben Jonson may justly be called one of Europe's first theoreticians of the tendentious in literature. In the prologue to *Every Man in His Humour*, he defines his aim as to "shew an image of the times, and sport with human follies." In the preface to *Volpone* he declares: "I have laboured for their instruction and amendment, to reduce not only the ancient forms, but manners of the scene, the easiness, the propriety, the innocence and last, the doctrine, which is the principal end of poesie, to inform men in the best reason of living."

Few, if any, will deny that Milton and Bunyan were still more tendentious than Shakespeare and Ben Jonson.

The entire English novel of the 18th century is permeated with moralistic tendentiousness. Defoe, Swift, Richardson, Fielding, Smollet, Goldsmith were all tendentious, each in his own way. Moral views were considered a necessary factor in the work of any writer; poetry and drama in the 18th century being fully as tendentious as the novel.

The romantics instituted a revolt against the ideas of the 18th century, but in the principles which they substituted for those of the preceding age, there is just as much tendentiousness. This we can see immediately we glance into the preface to Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads*: "Habits of meditation have, I trust, so prompted and regulated my feelings, that my descriptions of such objects as strongly excite those feelings will be found to carry along with them a purpose. If this opinion be erroneous, I can have little right to the name of a Poet. . . The understanding of the reader must necessarily be in some degree enlightened, and his affections strengthened and purified."

We shall not discuss Byron and Shelley, for, since the time of Southey and Jeffrey, they have too often been accused of tendentiousness to make it necessary to point out this quality in their writings.

The Victorian novel and Victorian poetry continue the tendentiousness of their predecessors, as may be seen in the works of Dickens, Thackeray and their followers, who created the modern social novel. In Cazamian's *Roman et Idées en Angleterre* the reader will find a most interesting exposition of the social ideas and tendencies in the Victorian novelists. We believe that no Russian novelist of the time of Dickens would be found as tendentious as the author of the *Christmas Stories*, *Hard Times* or *Little Dorrit*.

World literature knows no poetry to compare in moralizing tendency with that of Tennyson and the Brownings, as was proved most conclusively by the Pre-Raphaelites and the esthetic critics of the end of the century, who took the Victorian poets to task for this tendency. Meredith and Butler launched the reaction against Victorianism, but who will deny the tendentiousness in *The Way of All Flesh* or *Erewhon*.

The writings of Kipling, Shaw and Wells, which have won universal fame are all direct propaganda of definite principles.

I have mentioned only a few names, but they are the men who constitute the glory and

<sup>1</sup>Georgi Valentinovich Plekhanov (1856-1918), a prominent Russian historian, economist and philosopher, one of the founders of the Russian Socialist Democratic Party.



the greatness of English literature. Each of the writers mentioned included definite ideas in his work, and the majority of them openly acknowledged their tendentiousness.

An objective and unbiased approach to the subject must convince anyone that tendentiousness is far from being the exclusive property of Russian literature. It is as typical of English literature and of American and French and any other literature. And the apostle of "pure art" who maintains that this is a defect, must deny Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, Byron, Tennyson, Dickens, Kipling, Wells and Shaw.

Actually, the esthetes counterpose to the classical line of development in English literature, those writers of the past who are closest to their standpoint. For them Donne and the metaphysical poets are of primary importance, we find the estheticism of Keats emphasized, and an exalted view taken of Dante, Gabriel Rossetti, and Christina Rossetti, Thomson and other poets of English decadence. Although we have no desire to detract from the excellence of these poets, we must agree with the majority that they constitute the second, rather than the first rank of English writers.

Esthetes of various shades are eager to discuss what they allege to be an anti-art tendency in Soviet literature, their objections being levelled not only against the principle of tendentiousness generally, but the socialist and democratic ideas that form the content of Soviet literature. As a rule, the adherents of "pure art" are found among the antagonists of socialist ideas. The unprejudiced reader who examines the theories of these poets and critics will discover that they deny not only the artistic merits of Russian literature, but also the value of everything that is most significant in English literature. Consider, for example, T. S. Eliot's essay, arguing that *Hamlet* is a bad play. (See *Hamlet and His Problems* in the collection *The Sacred Wood*.) We cannot view with grave doubts the value of discussions on the artistic merits of Soviet literature, which emanate from a group of poets and critics among whom are people denying the literary merits of *Hamlet*. In my opinion, when people display a tendency inimical to art, no matter how deeply it may be obscured by prejudice about the beautiful and the necessity of restoring a sense of the beautiful.

### 3

tremendous efforts are exerted to prove that Russian literature constitutes a phenomenon distinct from the literatures of Western Europe and that the antipodes are reached when we compare western literature with Russian literature of the Soviet epoch. There are critics who endeavour to build up an artificial atmosphere of isolation around Russian literature. Yet everyone knows that the classics of Russian literature were deeply interested in every new literary current in other countries, that Russian literature reacted immediately to every new phenomenon in ideas and literary forms abroad.

There are peoples whose pride in their own culture is accompanied by scorn for the culture of other nations, but this has never been

the case in Russia. As early as 1838, the Russian critic Belinsky wrote: "It is no more fitting that we should be Germans than that we should be Frenchmen, for we have our own national life, flowing in a mighty, profound stream; nevertheless it is Russia's destiny to absorb all the elements of world life, let alone European. We Russians are the heirs of the entire world, not only of European life; moreover, we are the rightful heirs. . . . We take as our own everything that constitutes a distinguishing trait in the life of each of the peoples of Europe; we take it not as a distinguishing trait but as an element to be added to our life, whose distinguishing feature must be its variety. . . ."

Dostoyevsky insisted that the Russian's sympathies "extend to all mankind, regardless of nationality, blood or soil." "The Russian has a deeper love and appreciation of Shakespeare, Byron, Walter Scott and Dickens, than, say, the Germans," he wrote in 1876. "This Russian relation to world literature is a phenomenon which has perhaps never been present to such a degree in other peoples."

Soviet culture has inherited this tradition and it has developed even further with us. One of the first undertakings of the Soviet State in the realm of culture was the establishment of the *World Literature* publishing house, advocated by Maxim Gorky. This occurred in the difficult year, 1919. Much has been done along these lines since, including the publication of world classics in editions running into millions. The Soviet theatre includes in its repertoire such leading productions of world dramaturgy as the masterpieces of Sophocles, Shakespeare, Lope de Vega, Calderon, Molière, Sheridan, Goldsmith, Schiller, Hugo, Ibsen, Shaw; and a place has been found on the Russian stage for such modern dramatists as O'Neil, Somerset Maugham, Priestley and Lillian Hellman.

Russian literature, naturally, has its own national and historical traits. Just such national and historical traits distinguish English literature from French, American literature from German. That every literature has its own national characteristics is an obvious and elementary truth. However, no critic who does not choose to ignore the facts would think of representing Russian literature as something completely alien to the European.

There have always existed considerable links between Russia and the West, and spiritual bonds have developed to an increasing extent within the last century and a half. Russian writers have been subjected to the influence of Western writers, and have, in turn, exercised an influence on them. Beginning with the second half of the past century, Russian literature has been an integral part of European literature, and has occupied an outstanding place in that literature. The names of Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky alone are sufficient to prove that one cannot leave Russian literature out of any study of the development of European literature. In more recent times, Chekhov and Gorky have taken their place in that literature, and also Blok and Mayakovsky, who have been brought to European readers through translation.

Don't think I have wandered from my sub-

ject. It is most important that we establish the unity of world literary development, so that no doubt can remain that tendentiousness is not a purely national question. Tendentiousness is common to English, American, French, Russian and every other literature, in equal measure.

An erroneous conception of the nature of tendentiousness frequently leads to an incorrect assessment of the most important literary phenomena. Take, for example, the following conclusion quoted from Professor Simmons' *Outline of Modern Russian Literature*:

"Not infrequently an exaggerated emphasis has been placed upon the so-called 'tendentious' nature of Russian literature. Its tendentiousness existed more in the minds and demands of professional native critics than in the actual performance of great imaginative writers. . . . It is a striking fact that the famous novelists in the most fruitful period of Russian fiction kept singularly aloof from tendentious themes. Goncharov, Dostoyevsky, Turgenev, Tolstoy and Leskov for the most part ploughed their own furrows of art without turning to the left or to the right in order to satisfy the social demands of the critics. Such distinguished novels as *Oblomov*, *A Nest of Gentlefolk*, *War and Peace*, *Anna Karenina* and *The Brothers Karamazov* are unusually free from tendentiousness."

In actual fact the books mentioned by Professor Simmons are among the most openly tendentious literary compositions: I go so far as to say they are the most tendentious in all of Russian classical literature!

*Oblomov* is a novel criticizing aristocratic parasitism and exalting the active attitude towards life. *A Nest of Gentlefolk* is a sombre elegy of the irreparable ruin of aristocratic culture. *War and Peace* is a mighty patriotic panorama glorifying the Russian people and describing the search by the cream of the Russian aristocratic intellectuals for the meaning of life. *Anna Karenina* is a vivid portrayal of the dissolution of a family in aristocratic and bourgeois society. *The Brothers Karamazov* is full of Christian moralizing. The authors of these works never concealed their tendencies, and Professor Simmons' attempts to liberate them from such intentions are vain and entirely fruitless.

The task of every objective investigator is not to defend literature from accusations of tendentiousness, but to examine the nature of tendentiousness, understand and explain the relationship between tendentiousness and objectivity in artistic creation, the relation and interdependence of the author's ideas and the clash between them, and the objectivity of the description of life in the literary composition. Finally, we must estimate the influence of various tendencies on the vitality and the artistic strength of the composition.

Maxim Gorky considered literature the most common means of spreading ideas. "Investing ideas with flesh and blood gives them greater universal appeal and conviction than philosophy or science." At the same time Gorky points out that "bare thoughts, grammatically correct phrases logically connected are insufficient for a novel, which requires human beings with all their psychological complex-

ity, confused and contradictory as its elements are in the society of our day." Gorky also pointed out that "the novelist is broader than his tendencies in that the idea he defends must, to carry greater conviction, be juxtaposed to hostile ideas. The novelist thus informs us, although in distorted form, of what may be inimical to him."

Not without interest is the opinion of Engels on tendentiousness, expressed in a letter to Minna Kautsky. In speaking of her novel *Die Alten und die Neuen*, Engels says that it is by no means opposed to tendentious poetry. He points out that Aeschylus, the father of tragedy, and Aristophanes, the father of comedy, like Dante and Cervantes, were definitely tendentious poets. Engels writes that the Russian and the Norwegian writers of the second half of the 19th century "have produced splendid novels, all tendentious."

Engels was, however, opposed to stark tendentiousness. The tendency, he considered, must not be forced on the reader, but must arise naturally out of the setting and the action of the composition. He speaks of tendentiousness again in a letter to the English authoress, Miss Harkness. In it he says:

"I am far from finding fault with you not having written a pinchbeck Socialist novel, 'tendenz Roman', as we Germans call it, to glorify the social and political views of the author. That is not at all what I mean. The more the opinions of the author remain hidden, the better for the work of art."

Engels held that there were works in which the realism made itself felt, despite the views of the author. He took Balzac's *Human Comedy* as an illustration.

"Well, Balzac was politically a legitimist; his great work is a constant elegy unto the irreparable decay of good society; his sympathy is with the class that is doomed to extinction. But for all that his satire is never more cutting, his irony more biting than when he set in motion the very men and women with whom he sympathizes most deeply—the nobles. And the only men of whom he speaks with undisguised admiration are his bitterest political antagonists, the Republican heroes of the Cloître-Saint-Merri, the men who at that time (1830-36) were indeed the representative of the popular masses. That Balzac was thus compelled to go against his own class sympathies and political prejudices, that he saw the necessity of the downfall of his favourite nobles and described them as people deserving no better fate; that he saw the real men of the future where, for the time being, they alone could be found—that I consider one of the greatest triumphs of Realism, one of the greatest features in old Balzac."

▶ We may therefore speak of two types of tendencies: the tendency of the author and the tendency of the development of life itself. Actually the question boils down to the relationship of these two tendencies. If the author's tendency coincides with life itself, his composition will doubtless be realistic. Should the author champion things that are out of harmony with the actuality surrounding him, his work becomes unrealistic. However, there is a third category, and Balzac falls into this category. The author's sympathies



lay with a class doomed historically; but due to his realistic method of composition, he depicted that class with all the sternness of impartial justice. Balzac's political opponents, the left republicans, received a like justice. He saw that it was to these people that the future belonged. The resultant picture of society in the *Human Comedy* is a truthful one. Balzac maps the social tendencies of his time correctly.

Applying the same criteria to compositions of the great Russian novelists of the time helps us to a better understanding of them. Goncharov, Turgenev, Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky and others were definitely tendentious. But the content of their works is not exhausted by those ideas which they sought to embody in their writings. They produced works which mirrored the tendency of development of Russian society; they described the decay of the old aristocracy, the rise of democratic forces, and the spread of discontent with all forms of exploitation of man by man. The majority of the Russian classics were, beyond question, on the side of the democratic movements of their time and in their compositions gave their support to the awakening of the people.

There is tendentiousness and tendentiousness. There is the kind that helps the writer and the reader, when the author actuated by the interests of his time seeks a solution to questions that will work for the good of the people. This impulse can be seen in the great writers of both Russia, England, the United States and other countries. The writer's profound concern with the life of his people, his effort to shape the destiny of his people and to help his people is a noble motive crowning his art and stimulating him to produce true masterpieces. In many cases, therefore, tendentiousness itself exalts not only the social significance, but also the artistic strength of literature.

There are some who fall into the error of thinking that success in literature may be achieved by perfection of form alone. The writer who is not a master of his craft is, of course, engaged in a futile pursuit. However, given an equal mastery of the technique of writing, that author will achieve the greatest success who depicts life, who is actuated by a desire to find a solution to the problems that concern the life of the people.

The great merit of the Russian classics lies in the fact that they understood this axiom. Maxim Gorky wrote: "Russian literature carries a particularly great message and is of particular value in view of its breadth. There is no question which Russian literature does not take up and strive to find an answer to. Its constant preoccupation is with such questions as 'What is to be done?' 'What is best for us?' 'Who is at fault?'"<sup>1</sup>

These were questions that occupied the minds of the Russian people, crushed beneath the despotism of the autocracy, the landlords and the capitalists.

The Russian people's answer to the question "What is to be done?" was to throw off the

triple yoke of that despotism, and literature helped to instill the desire for liberation in the people. In vivid lines, literature went on to show the people "Who is at fault," delineating types among the tsarist bureaucracy, the landlords and the bourgeoisie, who were guilty of the people's sufferings. Finally, literature searched unremittingly for "What is best for us," the social system that would bring the people complete freedom.

The love of the Russian people for their country's literature was so profound because they found in that literature the thoughts and feelings that occupied the nation's mind. It was, moreover, a literature possessing the highest merits of artistic form. The Western reader was brought under the sway of Russian literature not only because of its artistry, but above all owing to its profound content, its philosophical ideas and its power of penetration into the remote fastnesses of the human soul. These qualities won worldwide popularity for such writers and thinkers as Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky.

Let us return to another statement concerning Russian criticism in Professor Simmons' book.

"From the time of V. G. Belinsky (1811-1848), the father of Russian literary criticism, critics among the radical intelligentsia, usually the most able and popular, tended to approve all literary productions on the basis of their political and social significance. Esthetic matters of form and expression were accorded a secondary place, or no place at all in the prevailing criticism."

Without going into the value of Professor Simmons' books, as a whole, I feel I must take exception to this statement. True, Russian critics, Belinsky in particular, demanded that the writer's work have a social content. This does not mean, however, that esthetic questions were relegated to a minor place.

"That beauty is a necessary condition of art, that without beauty there is not and cannot be any art, is an axiom," Belinsky wrote. The Russian critic acknowledged that "we ourselves were at one time ardent champions of beauty, as not only the sole element, but as the sole aim of art. This is always the starting point towards an understanding of art; art for art's sake, the conception of art as an end in itself is ever the first step in the process. Omitting this factor means never to achieve an understanding of art. Failure to progress beyond this point means a one-sided understanding of art."

"Art without a logical content of historical significance can satisfy only the literary 'has been'," Belinsky goes on to say. He considers that "in our time, the greatest creative skill will provide but ephemeral delight, should it be restricted to the production of 'bird songs', to the setting up of a world divorced from historical and philosophical reality. It will not endure if it imagines that its home is in the clouds and if it disdains mother earth, if the tribulations and the aspirations of mankind are not allowed to disturb its mysterious dreams and poetic meditations. But the bird sings because it is made to sing, it reacts neither to the sorrows nor to the joys of its feathered tribe. And how bitter it is to think that among the elect there are humans whose in-

<sup>1</sup> *What Is to Be Done?* — a novel by Chernyshevsky.

*Who Is at Fault?* — a novel by A. Herzen.

inspiration is like that of 'birds': they are happy that they can sing. They are above humanity, above the sufferings of their kind, whose eyes, filled with prayer and hope are turned to them in vain; their home is in the sky, they can find joy and consolation in their own souls. And this poetised egoism they call life, unchanging and eternal, aloof from the petty cares of the day."

Here is another quotation illustrative of the views of Belinsky: "Beyond a doubt, art must first of all be art. Only then can it begin to be the expression of the soul and the guiding star of society in any epoch. No matter how beautiful the thoughts with which a poem is filled, whatever the power with which the composition presents modern problems, if there is no poetry in it, there can be neither beautiful thoughts nor problems; the only thing we can say of the composition is that it contains good intentions poorly executed."

The reader will see that these views are not at all those which Simmons attributes to Belinsky. Belinsky's struggle for the development of a socially significant and democratic art was combined with his support of esthetic principles, and he did not separate one from the other.

Russian literature has pursued the path laid down by its great critics. Its objective has always been the unity of profound content and beauty of form.

I must make an excursion here into a question of esthetics. Chernyshevsky, the Russian philosopher and critic, counterposed the principles of materialistic esthetics to Hegel's idealistic esthetics. Chernyshevsky maintains that "the beautiful is life," not, as the idealists from the time of Plato to our own day hold, that "the beautiful is idea." This, however, does not mean that any reality is beautiful in itself. Russian philosophy has laboured in esthetics to discover those conditions which are most favourable to the development of the beautiful. Gorky maintains that we must first make life beautiful, must drive out of it everything that deforms and cripples man and his life. Russian and Soviet literature, therefore, combines the effort to create the beautiful with the struggle for a life that will make the beautiful living reality, and not merely an ideal.

Yes, Russian literature was and is tendentious. Its tendentiousness can be seen in its desire to dedicate itself to its people, to serve the most progressive democratic movements of the age. It is my belief that we can find the same tendentiousness in the finest classics of other nations.

#### 4

There is no literature that is not tendentious. All modern literature is tendentious. The question is not whether a writer is, or is not, tendentious; but rather what are the tendencies he follows. The antagonists of tendentious art in modern literature are people who remain aloof from the questions occupying the mind of our disturbed world. They are indifferent to the fate of the millions who want bread, work and conditions which will enable them to find delight in the beautiful.

The Soviet writer lives in the midst of his people. Together with them he strives for happiness and freedom. He wants no illusory independence in some ivory tower, but true freedom in a free world.

This explains why John Lehmann's recent article *State Art and Scepticism* met with such disapproval among Soviet writers. Lehmann writes that during the war, he and his companions "... have held passionately to our right to be critical, to be antinomian, to be gloomy when we should have been enthusiastic, to write about the rambler rose against the garden wall and the kingfisher on the willow branch, the sensual charms of our mistress, the monster-minute dramas of our childhood and schooldays, and everything else that has no immediate connection with the war. ..."

No one to whom the fate of culture is dear could take such a stand when the people are engaged in a life and death struggle against such a foe as fascism. The love that Soviet writers bear for art and culture is not platonic; they went to war both as patriots defending their own country and as artists defending art from the barbarians. There was never a thought of giving up the honour of fighting for these riches to others: they took their places in the ranks, and fought with sword and with pen.

Replying to Lehmann in the *Literaturnaya Gazeta* Alexei Surkov wrote: "During the war we did not indulge in paradoxes for the sake of paradox, nor did we defend our right to be gloomy when we should have been enthusiastic. If we wrote of the rose, it was of a rose sprinkled with warm human blood instead of the dew, and if it was of the kingfisher or the starling, it was of birds deprived of their nests by the war. The lover to us was the soldier, caught in the deadly blast of the war, whose heart was warmed by recollection of his beloved. We should have considered ourselves deserters had we done otherwise at a time when millions of our countrymen were suffering. In those great and tragic years we participated in great and tragic events. True to the heroic traditions of our classical literature and following the natural inclination of our hearts, we never thought of secluding ourselves in sceptical snobbery, but strove to exalt our art to the grim and heroic prose of war waged in the name of the noblest and most poetic of ideals."

The writer cannot stand aloof from life nor that the war is a thing of the past. The question is, what stand will he take—and he must choose one of two paths. One leads him, together with all the progressive forces of society, into the struggle for the consolidation of peace and the complete eradication of the fascist plague for the attainment of the best possible conditions for the free development of all people on democratic foundations. The other leads to seclusion from this struggle, to becoming the accomplices, willing or unwilling, of those who desire a repetition of the horrors of fascism after World War II. Reactionary forces are still extant and will strive to obtain their revenge. We may, of course, close our eyes to all this and sing of the rose and the rose alone but this will not absolve such writers from tendentiousness. It will be an anti-people and anti-democratic tendency, one that plays into the



hand of the reactionary servants of darkness and destruction who conceal their black thoughts, who fear the free word of the poet and who hate true beauty.

5

We have spoken of tendentiousness as the thought content of the writer's art. However, tendentiousness may be understood differently, and is sometimes thought of as the artist's fabrication of characters to prove his ideas. In other words, we mean a writer's distortion of reality in favour of a preconceived conception. Let's look into this type of tendentiousness, as it often forms an accusation levelled against Soviet writers.

Soviet writers, as is well known, write chiefly of the country in which they were born and reared, and whose life they know from personal experience. This can be seen in such well-known Soviet books as *And Quiet Flows the Don* and *Virgin Soil Upturned* by Sholokhov; *The Road to Calvary* by Alexei Tolstoy; *The Nineteen* and *The Last of the Udegei* by Fadeyev, the novels and plays of Leonid Leonov, *Out of Chaos* and *Without a Pause for Breath*, by Ilya Ehrenburg. The list could be continued, but we believe the books mentioned are adequate for our purpose.

It is the contention of some critics that these books must be included in those we call tendentious; that is, books which distort reality in favour of a socialist conception.

The question that arises in my mind when I read such accusations, is, how can a critic or writer living in London or New York know Soviet reality so well that he can judge of tendentiousness in the works of Sholokhov or Leonov? Would it not be natural to assume that Sholokhov and Leonov know Russian life better than any foreign critic?

True, the foreign reader will find much that seems strange and unlike the life he knows in Russian novels and plays. But Sholokhov, or Leonov must not be judged on the basis of preconceived conceptions, but after a more thorough acquaintance with Soviet life. Millions of Soviet readers know these books by Russian writers, and they are the best judges of how truthfully these authors portray their

life. And these readers have placed their trust in their writers, for they see that Soviet literature truthfully mirrors the life of the country, the people as a whole and the fate of individuals among them.

I do not deny that there are writers in Soviet literature who fabricate characters to suit their ideas. There are such writers. But their "bare tendentiousness" arises and exists not because they are Soviet writers but simply because they are bad writers, of whom there are many in any country and any literature. However, such writers do not define the character of a literature and we are not speaking of them. We are speaking of Soviet writers who are recognized by the whole people, whose books leave an imprint on the life and consciousness of the nation.

A number of foreign critics express displeasure over the fact that in the books of Soviet writers, the idea of socialism and collectivism is always victorious. But this is a fact drawn from Soviet life. This is not a tendency on the part of the writer, but a tendency of life itself, and the finest proof is the conduct of the Soviet people in the war. The source of the heroism of Soviet soldiers and officers in the war was love for their country. They knew that fascism wanted to deprive them of the freedom and happiness they had won by strenuous toil and struggle over a period of two decades. No form of compulsion could have produced the heroism of the men of Stalin-grad, the heroism of the partisans and the millions of fighting men who threw themselves heart and soul into the struggle against the invader.

The Soviet people are, indeed, very "tendentious". They love their country, have the deepest faith in its social system, and desire the preservation and development of that system. A writer who wrote anything differing from this might win the approval of certain critics, but he would be writing a tendentious falsehood. Soviet writers are tendentious in the sense that they express the tendencies that exist and have emerged victorious in Soviet life. To the Soviet reader, this constitutes a merit, no matter how it may be frowned upon by certain critics.

EVGENI ALMAZOV

## YOUNG POETS

A cycle of poems by Georgi Suvorov, a young and promising poet, appeared in the Leningrad magazine *Zvezda* (The Star) in 1944. By the time the verses reached the reader, their author was no longer among the living. He fell in battle against the Hitlerites at the end of his poetical career, which opened so fair and bravely, was brought to a close.

Suvorov's poetry dealt with the beauty of ordinary things—of two young birch trees growing on the battlefield amid the shell-craters; of wild berries found in the woods during a reconnaissance mission, and which reminded the poet of his native village in far-off Siberia; of the bird that his hunter's heart ached to bring down, but at which he refused to fire for fear of warning the German

whom he was tracking. These were the verses of a nature-lover and a brave soldier who looked death fearlessly in the face.

Georgi Suvorov perished at the threshold of his poet's career. But his contemporaries, young poets of either sex, who passed through the war, are introducing into literature the themes and feelings that stirred Suvorov and millions of other youths, for whom the beginning of the war against fascism meant the beginning of their own social and personal maturity. Poems by more and more young authors are appearing in Soviet periodicals, in slim volumes of collected or selected verse, and new names impress themselves upon the reader's memory.

It is already evident that a new generation

has entered the ranks of Soviet poetry. Galina Nikolaeva, Alexander Mezhirov, Semyon Gudzenko, Mikhail Dudin, Mikhail Lvov, Galina Shergova, Mark Sobol, Mikhail Lukonin, Yulia Drunina, Victor Uran—this is by no means a complete list of the young poets who have made their debut in recent months. While all these authors already are distinguished by a clearly-defined individual style, at the same time there are traits common to all which unite them and make it possible to speak of them as a monolithic school.

This is a school that made its appearance and grew up during the war against fascism. The war years have left an unmistakable impress on the poetry of these young people. To write about the war is an organic necessity for them, in doing so they express their own emotions and experiences, their hopes and aspirations. For many of them the war proved a school of life, and that is why its theme is the leit-motif in their creative work, why it determines their choice of subject and colours their style.

These young poets write about their youth illumined by the lurid glare of the battlefield, about the grim trials and exploits which demand great courage of heart and strength of soul from youths, men and girls, reared to a life of peaceful, constructive work.

"No, that is no hut burning!  
It is my youth aflame!"

exclaims Yulia Drunina. The same thought is expressed by Victor Uran who speaks of a youth which was "enriched by the fact that it marched forward under the hail of bullets." Yes, this is a generation which was tempered and grew to maturity under shot and shell and in the heat of the flames.

But the struggle has not maimed or brutalized them, and the boys and girls who have lived through this most cruel and sanguinary of wars, are by no means a "lost generation". They have not only preserved, they have reinforced the healthy spirit and moral integrity characteristic of Soviet youth. All that was best in them came to the fore, and they have developed into ardent champions of truth and justice, into implacable foes of evil. As soldiers in a war fought for the liberation of mankind, they consecrated minds and hearts to the great tasks with which history confronted the Soviet land. Liberty for the people and the triumph of justice are no abstract understandings for Soviet artists of all ages and generations, but very concrete, vital conceptions. In the eyes of the young poets the blood and the struggle, the death of comrades and the hardships of the battlefield were inspired by the noble aim—to annihilate fascism and to defend culture and humanism. These aims have become part of the flesh and blood of Soviet people, they are not merely beautiful ideals, but canons of normal behaviour.

*Comrades of the Regiment* by Semyon Gudzenko, one of the first books of verse written by the younger generation of poets, came off the press during the war. Reading these poems one clearly feels how the poet's character was gradually moulded, how his ideas and sympathies, interests and principles matured.

The poems with which the book opens are of a general nature—in them Gudzenko declares his intention to fight for his homeland and for humanity; he vows on behalf of himself and his comrades to love yet more passionately, to treasure friendship still more dearly. Then the poet passes on to topical themes; he gives us *The Ballad of Loneliness*, *The Ballad of Home*, *The Ballad of Friendship*. The last is the best of the three. It is about two soldier friends, belonging to the same regiment, who must decide which of them is to go out on a risky mission, fraught with danger of almost certain death. The younger volunteer is pleading that his friend has a family at home whereas he is alone. He accomplishes the mission and returns unscathed to the dugout, only to learn that his comrade followed him, protected him with his covering fire and perished, giving his life for his friend. . . .

The poet, whose attention is centred on the moral underlying the events he describes, finds the necessary grim and truthful words with which to portray the action, the feelings which assail men going into battle. The poem reflects the snow, blackened by mines, the infantry lying frozen in the snow waiting for the flare that is to signal the attack, and the soldier who feels himself to be a magnet, attracting mines. But at the same time, Gudzenko skillfully conveys the feelings of the men for each other and for their families in the rear.

Describing the gradual maturing of his hero, the poet notes that "he wrote more and more letters to his mother." And it is true that amid the anxieties and dangers of front-line life, the beautiful and simple things of ordinary peace-time life, formerly accepted as a matter-of-fact, became particularly precious. This revaluation of old values is a favourite theme with the young poets. The life of society as a whole, their own family-lives, nature—everything appeared to them in a new light and an inner urge compels them to speak of these things in warm and tender words.

The soldier poets have not confined themselves to a portrayal of front-line life. Their range of vision is wide and varied: they sing about victory won, about nature and about creative work, about the future with its return to peaceful labour, and the longed-for reunions of near and dear friends.

In a poem dedicated to his sweetheart Mikhail Lukonin tells her that he will not return broken and weary, but that he will come back full of the ardent desire to work and to create, to love and enjoy life. He is not hurrying home to seek comfort or gratitude, on the contrary he is ready to help others. He has looked death in the eyes and now he wants to live "deeply and fully." But if faced with war again, he would act the same, honourably fulfilling his duty as a soldier. The poet's closing words are that there was "little choice" amidst the "fatal conflagration," but that it is better to return "with an empty sleeve than with an empty soul."

The sincere, eager lyric poet Lukonin reaches the same conclusions as the more restrained, stern Gudzenko, who prefers topical poetry. Both of them place spiritual richness



the knowledge of duty done, of a clear conscience, above all else.

Thus, civic themes are given a lyrical interpretation in the works of the younger poets. Social problems are treated in close connection with the poet's personal, individual interests and desires.

The work of young poetesses bears distinctive, "womanly" traits. True, it reveals the emotions of girls who fought at the front, who faced death many a time, but even these grim surroundings could not alter their ability to feel, their gentleness, aspiration and naivety. Yulia Drunina, for instance, describes with touching directness the death of her young heroine—the fair-haired Zina who led a battalion into action and perished gloriously. She recalls Zina's words about her mother, anxiously awaiting her at home, about the cottage buried in apple-blossom, about the old, familiar surroundings which she would never see again, and the simple words are full of a very real sincerity and touching grief.

If Drunina's luminous lines are concise and aphoristic, the verses of Galina Shergova overflow with life and are full of vivid landscapes and strong, imperious emotions. This young poetess seeks sharp and unexpected comparisons, sounding rhymes; she seeks to convey the joy of the soldiers' homecoming, the blossoming of orchards no longer blighted by war, the happiness of peace and work required anew.

Of an altogether different nature is the work of Galina Nikolaeva, who has a very clearly-defined theme. She has created a lyrical heroine with the glorious biography of one who participated in great battles. Having experienced suffering, and witnessed the death of her nearest friends, she searches for rich, sonorous language with which to express the emotions that surge within her, to portray the valour of the millions who tried to save their country and mankind from fascism. She speaks of her desire to write "in blazing, truthful words." She recalls the hours of grief and pain, she recalls the dead, and it seems to her that her fallen comrades have bequeathed their voices to her, that she may bring them. In this conception of her duty as an artist voluntarily undertaken, in the strength and purity, clearness and directness of her language lie the chief interest and value of Nikolaeva's poetry. Her poetry is feminine, but this womanliness is severe and strict; she has been tempered in the fires of grief and misfortune and, therefore, no further hardships or trials hold any terror for her; she looks into the future with calm confidence, knowing that her fate is inseparable from the fate of the Soviet land.

Our young poets regard their intimate, personal experiences as part of the general struggle. This organic bond of the individual with the community reveals itself in different ways: in straightforward lyrical "diaries", and topical verses with tense, dramatic episodes, and philosophical verse of a more general nature. Such, for instance, are the poems of the talented Leningrad poet Mikhail Dudin who in his latest cycle *The Feast* strives to arrive at conclusions and results, at syntheses. In the moment of victory and triumph

he mourns for the fallen, but he asks neither pity nor sympathy, he has no desire to forget, he wants his grief to be profound and strong, and in this he sees true courage. He finds "a delicate meaning in the inconstancy of nature", in its purity and simplicity, and he pleads with the wind to blow more fiercely, to rush forward with greater violence, because he, the poet, "lives swiftly" and he revels in the play of the wind.

These lines are written with an exceedingly calm intonation. The poet glances backward along the road he has traversed and strives to define his thoughts and emotions in clear, firm words.

A different approach is found by Alexander Mezhirov, one of the more interesting of the younger poets, who like Dudin is not inclined to elementary, lyrical "self-expression" but wants to merge himself into life with all its many-sided aspects. And Mezhirov pictures his lyrical hero as a part of the mighty life force, a link in the great and harmonious whole. The poems *At a Wayside Station in Winter, 1941, The Front-Lines, The Ice of Lake Ladoga* mirror the personal experience of the hero, but inseparably connected with it are the blacked out wayside station during a night in the first winter of the war, with the soldiers, chilled to the bone, silently preparing for battle; and the black ice of Lake Ladoga over which walk the children from starving, besieged Leningrad; and the warm summer rain over the beautiful city which the Germans are shelling with heavy guns; and the bivouac in the shell-stricken pine woods above the Sinyavino marshlands. These pictures as portrayed by Mezhirov are full of an inner tension, they are dynamic and expressive. The narrative and lyrical elements of the poem merge into an integral whole.

Mezhirov has an excellent sense of the specific possibilities of poetical language. He knows that poetry has a logic of its own, entirely different from the logic of prose. He appeals to the reader to believe in "beautiful dreams" because all of them "will come true." You need not be a poet, he exclaims, just close your eyes for a moment, and you will feel

"...the city,

Its palaces.

Avenues.

The breeze from the Baltic.

You will forget the cold.

The hunger.

You will find the strength to endure."

In happy dreams Mezhirov merges the images of Leningrad with general moral principles. But in this rapid flow of speech you can clearly follow the poetical theme of faith and beauty, of duty as a soldier and a poet.

Mezhirov adheres to the traditions of Mayakovsky and Tikhonov, Aseev and Bagritsky, Antokolsky and Pasternak. From them he has learned the dynamic and forceful poetical language, the bold and unexpected images, the freedom and variety of rhythm. At the same time, the young poet is working out his own methods, gradually he is elaborating his own style of poetry, and he succeeds because he has his own attitude to the world, his own theme, his own point of view.

In the same way, Mezhirov's contemporaries are seeking their own poetic paths. They have plenty to tell—everything won and created by the Soviet people during the years of war must now be utilized for the cause of peace. In difficult searchings the poet's individuality is gradually born and developed. Here and there in the verses of the young poets we come upon stark declarations, unconfirmed by any poetic image. Here and again, apprehensive that their efforts may appear tame and colourless they incline to another error—resorting to tasteless originality and affectation. Sometimes they indulge in entire, ready-coined phrases from the works of the older poets.

But all these are only growing pains, which become dangerous only if they threaten to become a permanent sickness taking firm

root in the yet weak organism. The young Soviet poets possess a strong antidote, a steady, purposeful activity, which protects them against the danger of epigonism and naturalistic copying from life. Soviet poetry arose in an atmosphere of heroic and wonderful exploits, it is permeated with a hatred of evil and emanates a love of good, of truth and beauty. It strives for knowledge and expression of life in all its manifold hues and contradictions, it is addressed to nature and mankind, to society and art which are the chief themes, the most important aims of all creative work. Of course, these aims are not easily achieved. But difficulties hold no terrors for the generation that has emerged victorious from the war.

JOSEPH GRINBERG

## THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACE — PANFYOROV'S NEW NOVEL

Panfyorov will be fifty this year. He and the generation of Soviet writers to which he belongs witnessed the collapse of the old world. He lived through the grim, heroic years of the Civil War: he watched the growth of the young Soviet republic and realized the price in sweat and toil that was paid for the liberty of his country.

"I remember a forest like the thick mane of a well-fed horse," he tells us, referring to his childhood days, "and a valley, and Grandma Dounya's little cottage perched at the head of it. In a corner there was a large, glass case containing many big dark, wax-stained icons and a lot of little brass ones—all saints doing things, some on horseback spearing dragons, others with their arms raised and so on; I would press my face against the icon case and gaze at the saints for hours. . . . Grandma used to climb onto my bunk behind the stove, take my head between her gnarled, tender hands and tell me stories. She told me about people who lived in the mountains, forests and caves and who did nothing but pray. The servants of man came down on them and drove them out. Grandma always wept when she told me about these people. I realized afterwards that she was telling me about herself and her ancestors, the Old Believers, who used to live in the Volga forests and were scattered by the tsar's satraps.

"These were the days of my first insight into the ways of the world."

Fyodor Panfyorov, son of a peasant, tasted at an early age the bitterness of eating from another's table and the weariness of climbing the steps of a strange stairway. His father was a carpenter in Baku, a man who drowned all his sorrows in drink and who was violent when drunk. Fyodor's mother cried and vented her impotent rage on the children. The youngsters grew up without knowing the love of their parents. When still quite small, Fyodor used to go with his mother and his elder brother to scoop up mazout from the Caspian. This dangerous and laborious toil brought in a miserable pittance. Fyodor made

up his mind to leave home, and at the age of nine he ran away to work as a shepherd.

"The days I spent with the old shepherd and his flock alone with nature were the happiest days of my childhood. I learned to love nature. It is impossible not to speak of what one loves. There was nobody to talk to and so I began writing poetry." Panfyorov himself has long forgotten those boyhood whispers childishly naive but as artless as nature herself.

Later Panfyorov worked as an errand-boy in a shop. He became a passionate reader: from dawn to dusk he ran errands and at night he read. He had to put up with his employer's insults and he suffered from headaches but he found firm friends in the books. His companions and teachers in this difficult period of his childhood were Pushkin, Gogol, Turgenev and Gorky. He realized his lack of schooling and began to attend classes. Three years later he entered a teachers' seminary. He did not graduate for he was carried away by the revolutionary events of 1917.

He began work in the editorial offices of a provincial newspaper and at the same time lectured in the villages.

His plays, *Children of the Sun*, *The Ugly Man*, *The Muzhiks* and others had already been produced in village theatres. The writer was deeply interested in the Russian village where, to use his own words, "old traditions were violently crumbling." He decided to write a novel about village life and went to live amongst the peasants; with the hungry eyes of an artist he studied their lives and collected his material. This study led to the publication of two books of sketches, *From Village Fields* and *At Dawn*. In 1927 Panfyorov began work on the first part of *Bruski*. English-speaking readers of Soviet literature know Panfyorov mainly as the author of this monumental epic of Soviet country life; it was completed in 1937 after ten years of hard work.



The publication of *Brusski* gave rise to violent and impassioned discussions among the reviewers. Time, however, is the best critic and while squabbles about the novel continued in the columns of the magazines it won a prominent place in Soviet literature.

Although only the first of the three books of Panfyorov's latest novel, *The Struggle for Peace*, has been published, it has aroused deep interest. The subject is the Soviet people during the war against Nazi Germany.

In his latest novel Panfyorov adheres to the epic form; he unfolds a broad canvas that embraces the major events of the period covered. True to his own traditions Panfyorov has again chosen a subject dictated by history itself; he has not waited for the passage of time to mellow events and place them in suitable perspective. Characters for his novel he found amongst real living people.

The story begins in the summer of 1941, on June 22nd, a day engraved eternally on the memories of the Soviet people. It is a Sunday and the whole country is at rest. Panfyorov gives us a number of sketches of the peaceful occupations of the people of Moscow on that day, sketches that are faintly tinged with wistful sadness for a peaceful tranquillity rudely disturbed by war. Old Ivan Kuzmich Zamyatin, a factory foreman, had gone to the forest with his family to gather mushrooms. Mushrooming was his hobby and that Sunday he was happy.

Stepan Yakovlevich Petrov was deputy foreman of the gear-box shop at an automobile works who dreamed of planting an orchard. That day he and his wife visited their cottage in the country: the strawberries that he had planted were ripe. He, too, was happy.

Then there was Engineer Nikolai Korablyov, manager of the automobile engine plant. A great change had come into his life: that day the People's Commissar had sent for him and told him that he was to supervise the building of a big engine plant in the Urals. On the Sunday in question he had taken a plane for Zaporozhye where his wife and year-old son were on holiday.

Korablyov is a leading engineer who is highly respected on account of his long experience. His wife is an artist and has just completed a new picture, *The Dnieper*, which has been well received by the critics. They have a splendid son. Korablyov is a man with breadth of vision and whose whole attention is devoted to Soviet industry. He, too, has his dreams: together with Vassili Zamyatin, the son of Ivan Kuzmich, he is working out methods for the tempering of metals by high-frequency currents. The experiments are going well and Korablyov hopes to finish them soon.

Panfyorov's portraits of his main characters are laconic but expressive: they live ordered lives, they are spiritually stable and have a clearly defined future before them. Each is going his own way towards his own chosen goal.

The war comes like a bolt from the blue. At the moment when Korablyov is playing with his son, when Stepan Yakovlevich is treating the neighbours' children to strawberries, when Ivan Kuzmich has discovered mushrooms 'dipped in wonderful honey from linden

flowers" and Vassili Zamyatin is busy at his calculations, the German army has already invaded Soviet territory and the Luftwaffe is raining bombs on Soviet towns and villages. The idyllic melody of the first chapter breaks off suddenly in the middle of a sentence. A sudden change occurs in the novel. Events begin to unfold rapidly like a gigantic fugue. The action is expanded and new characters are drawn into the story. Vast masses of people are on the move as the whole land becomes a theatre of war.

The war wrought fantastic changes in people's lives. Those who but the day before had been engaged in peaceful labour were faced with the most extraordinary and complicated situations. In the novel, however, we do not find an artificially elaborated plot: for the material from which it is built up is, in itself, so dramatic that whimsical constructions are unnecessary.

The whirlwind of war sends the various characters to different parts of the country. Korablyov goes to the Urals to build his factory and the plant in which he formerly worked follows in the same direction. Ivan Kuzmich and Stepan Yakovlevich arrive with the factory personnel. Zamyatin goes to the front, laying down his drawing instruments to take up a rifle. War separated all these men from their families. Quite by chance Korablyov's wife, Tatyana, found herself with her mother and her son in the village of Livnya, Orel Region, which was shortly afterwards captured by the Germans. The families of Ivan Kuzmich and Stepan Yakovlevich travel to Barnaul in Siberia.

The narrative follows two main lines, one depicting the heroism of Soviet workers in the rear as demonstrated by the building of the automobile engine works in the Urals while the other relates the sufferings and deeds of the Soviet people in the German-occupied territories. Human character develops to the fullest extent when man is placed in a situation that requires the utmost exertion of both physical and spiritual strength. These are the situations in which Panfyorov places his characters.

Taking advantage of the "surprise" element and thanks to their initial superiority in tanks and planes the Germans advanced deep into the Soviet Union. The Red Army needed more engines for its tanks and aircraft. The fate of the country was at stake. Korablyov, in charge of the building job, and his engineers and workers are fully aware of this.

"The Urals is a sleeping giant and if it is awakened we shall be invincible." The builders were confronted with stony mountains, dense forests, subterranean lakes and landslides, severe frosts and blizzards. They were shorthanded and the railway could not bring them sufficient building materials, food or clothes.

The titanic duel had begun and the people got down to work. The enemy's attacks continued and the occupied territories were turned into bloody prisons where free people were doomed to oppression and death. They were faced with the question of whether to join in the unequal battle or to submit to the ruthless enemy. Men of honour and spirit chose

the first course and joined the partisan units—they became people's avengers.

The small German garrison of Livnya was commanded by Hans Koch. He was an average German officer, a university graduate in the humanities and a man who regarded murder philosophically and plunder poetically. He was an educated murderer and bandit. Hans Koch had hoped to be a musician but the war prevented the realization of his ambitions. Hitler came to him and said: "Nonsense, Hans, the greatest music of life is to plunge your knife into the body of the enemy and twist, twist, twist it. . . You, Hans, must be a soldier, you will conquer the world, you will be rich."

Hans thought that this was probably true and became a soldier.

"The knife is no music. Gold is music. Can one kill for gold? Of course one can."

Hans Koch killed, raped and plundered with cold ruthlessness and German precision. In the language of his kind this was called establishing the new order in conquered countries.

The gallows, the symbol of fascism, appeared on the village square. The best people of the village were hanged. Darkness descended on the people of Livnya. Strangely enough, the more they suffered the stronger their spirit grew, the more stubborn did their resistance become.

The mighty passions that are born of war take possession of the people and transform them into gallant fighters and heroes. These passions put the lives of whole nations and those of individuals into a ferment. Diderot had such passions in mind when he wrote in his *Lettres Philosophiques*: "Passions alone and only great passions can elevate the soul to the performance of great deeds. Everything, moral life and creative effort, comes to an end without these passions. Moderate passions are the lot of ordinary people. If I do not strive my utmost to meet the enemy when my homeland is in danger I am not a citizen but a Philistine. My friendship is of too cautious a nature if the danger of my friend does not compel me to forget my own danger."

What was it that made people, hungry for life, rush forward to meet death? What force was it that gave them strength to endure inhuman suffering? What put the axe or the rifle into the hand of the peace-loving, good-natured labourer? Love for the homeland and hatred for the foreign invader, feelings deep-rooted in the nature of the Russian people; new fires burned within them, their hearts grew stronger and man girded himself to battle against the danger which threatened him.

Mitka Mamin, the treacherous village elder appointed by Hans Koch, was killed by an unknown assailant. Suspicion fell on an old man named Yermolai Agapov. He was a strong man, strong in his wisdom and in his faith in the people. He said to himself: "I have lived many years in this world and have seen many things. I didn't always trust my wife's judgement and I didn't always have confidence in my neighbours but I have always believed in the people."

Shortly before he had returned from the partisans and had seen people "whose sinews

could be torn out but they would not breathe a word." They had taught him to fight.

Hans Koch had Agapov flogged. The dignified old man did not yield or break down. They ordered him to kneel but he said that nobody had ever made him kneel though many had tried.

Koch ordered Agapov's tongue to be cut out. The old man died in horrible agony and his death shook the whole village.

Tatyana Polovtseva, Korablyov's wife, came to Livnya quite by chance. She acted as Koch's interpreter and with great skill played a dangerous role requiring considerable resolution. The suspicions of the local people made her position more difficult. She had long decided Koch's fate and though her hands, used to the artist's brush, held the knife very clumsily, she killed Koch with the very weapon that had been used to cut out Agapov's tongue. When Koch had been killed the people of Livnya set fire to their village and every one of them, young and old, went into the forest to join the partisans. They travelled the dangerous paths of Bryansk Woods. These were not peaceful evacuees but people thirsting for vengeance, each of whom felt that the German officer had died by his hand. The people marched on day and night in silence; some fell from exhaustion and the living stayed only to bury the dead. A German punitive expedition with tanks and artillery overtook them on the edge of the forest. A swamp lay between the Germans and the partisans. The people from Livnya dashed through the swamp, some were cut down by enemy bullets, some were engulfed in the quagmire; the living advanced over the bodies of the dead and reached the partisans.

The village incident at times rises to the height of genuine epic with the tragic intensity of the action constantly increasing.

Now let us turn to the other line in the book, the Soviet rear.

The factory is built in a dismal region where shortly before wild beasts had roamed and fierce Urals' storms had raged. When the engineers came they had nothing; no plans, no material, and no workers. The local people, mostly gold-diggers, were stern and reticent, but gradually they came to work on the construction job. Yevstigney Koronov, a roving gold prospector, is an interesting character. His dangerous calling in the wilds of the Ural mountains has taught him cunning and carelessness. In man he admires first and foremost intellect. His house is a tiny patriarchal domain into which the hubbub of the outside world never penetrates. War broke up the home. His sons went into the army and the old man himself went to the building job and took his daughters-in-law with him.

"I've seen my sons off to the army. They rushed away as eager as anything. What are they likely to say when they come home? Won't they ask me whether I stayed just to guard the backyard? They might, you know. Give me a job, know-all," he said to Korablyov. The old man was a born organizer and a splendid manager and the works soon became dearer to him than his own home.

By dint of arduous toil the people surmounted the difficulties that stood in their way.



The Ai-Tulak mountain came sliding down on them, subsoil waters filled the foundations, the blizzards buried the buildings under snow and interrupted the work, but still the people continued their struggle against the elements, fell exhausted and rose again to subdue nature. There was no borderline between front and rear; in all places the people were engaged in the same work, they were forging victory. Vassili Zamyatin wrote a letter to his father from Stalingrad in which he said: "Once I saw the wall of a six-storey house rotter and fall. Akhmet Yusupov, a Tatar, said: 'The house is tired, the stones are tired, the air is tired and we are tired, but we will keep on fighting.'"

Marcilio Faccino, an Italian Renaissance humanist, wrote proudly of the man for whom the sky was not too high nor the centre of the earth too deep. This idea forms a sort of triumphant melody in Panforyov's novel. The central figure is Korablyov who embodies all the best features of the generation of intelligentsia that grew up during the years of the Stalin five-year plans. The country gave them all it could and they are giving the country all they have, knowledge, strength and loyalty.

The image of Engineer Korablyov permeates the novel. Korablyov combines the vision of the revolutionary with the best features of the businessman. Although reserved he is a passionate man, strong, and modest. His mental life is rich and varied, he is not lacking in feelings and emotions but is free from those inner contradictions which would hinder his service to the community.

Korablyov is a man to whom duty and creative effort are everything. It would be difficult to imagine Korablyov locked up in an "ivory castle" or living in any way with his emotions separated from those of the "mob". He realizes that nothing on earth is stronger than man, therefore man must be properly organized and equipped. In this he finds his vocation.

If the reader likes a neurotic, weak-willed hero who indulges in constant introspection he may find Korablyov too strong-willed to worry about his fate and possessed of too much common sense to admire his deeds.

True, Korablyov does not resemble the heroes which writers created in the tragic period of contradiction between poesy and reality. Soviet life brings poesy and reality into line with each other. Soviet life created Korablyov in its own image, endowed him with its great simplicity, realism and spiritual clarity.

Korablyov's moral purity is also attractive. From the moment he and his wife Tatyana Polovtseva first met up to the time of their forced separation there were feelings of deep love and devotion between them. He remained true to his feelings when he was away from her in spite of the temptations encountered.

There is nothing accidental in Panforyov's posing the question of the family and of faithfulness. Life itself thrusts the matter into the forefront. The essence of the problem is expressed by Voronov, an old worker, in conversation with Korablyov. "You carry the truth on your shoulders. Keep on carrying it. It is easier to carry lies, they weigh no more than feathers, you blow and they are gone.

Truth is as heavy as pig-iron. But when you appear before the tribunal of the people to be judged you will lift the truth down from your shoulders, wipe the sweat from your brow and say: 'This, brothers, is the truth I have carried on my shoulders all my life.' And they will make a great man of you."

Korablyov has his opposite in the book, Mark Rukavishnikov, manager of the automobile engine works evacuated from Moscow, who works alongside Korablyov. These two opposites are not saint and sinner but social personalities of different types. Rukavishnikov, as the Russian proverb says, "is sitting on the wrong sledge". As manager of the works he is out of place.

Rukavishnikov is lacking in administrative experience and ability. An honest man would resign from a job that's too big for him, but Rukavishnikov is ambitious and tries to play the part of another person. He is a bad actor and plays the part poorly, he grows confused, tries to put things to rights and falls into dishonest ways: he claims the successes of others and blames his own failures on to other people. He intrigues against Korablyov and discharges all the engineers who hinder his advancement. Rukavishnikov flatters the workers who simply laugh at him behind his back.

Rukavishnikov is both stupid and ambitious with all the vanity and cynicism of the Philistine. He is not a villain and not an enemy but one of those people who are like a splinter in a sore thumb when they are in the wrong place.

Against the background of this huge construction job, against the background of the passions and struggle of those who labour, the author depicts a lively and instructive conflict between the individual and the collective.

In the olden days the Russians had an excellent custom. When a man left his birthplace he took with him a handful of earth to remind him of home. When Tatyana Polovtseva flees from the Germans she takes with her the picture *The Dnieper*. Whatever troubles befall her she always keeps the picture with her. Old Ivan Kuzmich takes the drawings of his engineer son to the Urals with him and carefully preserves them.

This is a symbol of a mighty, influential force, of an undying creative urge. For this the best people of the Soviet Union struggled, for this they gave their blood—to create human happiness, to surround man with everything that is beautiful and tranquil so that he may know neither fear nor need and may rear his children, the citizens of the future.

Panforyov has the eye and the ear with which to appreciate the life of the people, the ability to hit on the right word, to place different types in their proper environment and thus produce a realistic picture of life as a whole. The working-class characters speak in their own expressive language.

The discussions that take place between the characters of *The Struggle for Peace* cover the main points that formed the sole interest of all people at that time. Panforyov does not confine himself to a description of the heroism of a few individuals but of millions of our contemporaries.

ISRAIL MIRIMSKY

## SHAKESPEARE IN RUSSIA

Shakespeare Day—April 23rd—is an annual event in the Soviet Union. The newspapers devote considerable space to articles on Shakespeare, conferences are held at which literary critics discuss problems connected with the study of his works, new productions of his plays are staged in our theatres. The Soviet people honour Shakespeare as a great master whose art served the best ideals of humanity and still today represents an unsurpassed example of realism in art.

Shakespeare's works have long been an integral part of the Russian culture and there are few Russian writers whose works do not reflect Shakespeare's art in some form or other. His plays are as prominent in the history of the Russian theatre as those of the Russian playwrights, and Russian critics have devoted much time and thought to the study of Shakespeare's works.

As space does not permit me to deal in detail with the study and presentation of Shakespeare's plays in Russia, I shall try merely to outline the role of this great playwright in Russian cultural life.

### I

Shakespeare was first introduced to the Russian public in the middle of the 18th century; in 1748, Alexander Sumarokov, one of the leading Russian classicists, published a version of *Hamlet* which was staged in St. Petersburg in 1750. In Sumarokov's version, Shakespeare's play was changed beyond recognition; this was due not only to the author's desire to abide by the three unities, but also to the fear that a plot centring around the murder of a king might be regarded as an allusion to the fate of Tsar Peter III whose assassination was accomplished with the consent of his wife who later became Catherine II. Therefore, Sumarokov introduced many changes into Shakespeare's play, centring the tragedy around the conflict between Hamlet and Polonius and producing a play more closely resembling Corneille's *Le Cid*, than the English drama.

In 1783, a re-written version of *Richard III* appeared, and in 1786 the Empress Catherine II, who dabbled in literature, made a free translation of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Catherine also wrote a play around the subject of *Timon of Athens* changing this into... a comedy under the title of *The Spendthrift*.

Nikolai Karamzin, historian, novelist and poet and leader of the Russian school of sentimentalism, introduced the real Shakespeare to the Russian people in 1787, with his translation of *Julius Caesar*. This initiative was not followed by other translators who continued to distort Shakespeare's works; they used Ducis' French versions and added their own changes.

The translations and productions of *Othello* (1806), *King Lear* (1807) and Ducis' *Hamlet* (1810) were all similarly treated. In 1821, Prince Shakhovskoy staged his own version of *The Tempest* followed in 1825 by a one-act comedy entitled *Falstaff*.

Mikhail Vronchenko started a new Shakespeare vogue in 1828 with an exact translation of *Hamlet*. This was followed by good translations of *Richard III* (1833), *Othello* (1836) and another *Hamlet* (1837). Beginning with the thirties, fairly accurate versions of Shakespeare's plays in translation made their appearance in Russia, and in the forties the first Russian volume of Shakespeare's collected works was published, translated by Nikolai Ketcher in prose. The first edition of the prose translations appeared in 1841-43; the second between 1858-1879.

The time was clearly ripe to provide the Russian reader with the whole of Shakespeare in verse, and the poets Nekrasov and Gerbel undertook to organize this work. They gathered together a group of translators—Druzhinin, Weinberg, Sokolovsky, Satin, Kroneberg, Miller, Ryzhov and others—and the first edition of their works appeared between 1865 and 1868. This edition was subsequently republished several times, the old translations being partially replaced by new ones each time.

Throughout the second half of the 19th century, the translations edited by Nekrasov and Gerbel were the source from which the Russian public drew their knowledge of Shakespeare. They were not superceded by the edition published by Gatzuk (1880-1889) nor by the new prose translation of all Shakespeare's works made by Kanshin (1893), nor by Sokolovsky's work who accomplished the Herculean task of translating the whole of Shakespeare into verse (1894-1898). The latter won the Academy of Sciences Pushkin Prize.

A five-volume de-luxe edition edited by Professor Semyon Vengerov (1902-1905) appeared at the beginning of the 20th century. It consisted partially of new translations. Each play was introduced by a comprehensive essay written by an authoritative scholar or critic.

All the 19th century translations including the Vengerov edition, bore the imprint of romanticism. They were not always accurate and translators frequently changed certain coarse expressions in the original. Many of the translations were much longer than the original, but on the whole they reproduced Shakespeare with fair accuracy.

After the October Revolution a new school of translation arose. The plays were published separately in large editions. Several collections of selected plays were published, and finally, in 1937 work was begun on a completely new edition of Shakespeare's collected works in carefully checked translations. This edition has not yet been completed and several new volumes are due to be published in the near future.

The founder of this new school of Shakespearean translation was Mikhail Lozinsky, who published his version of *Hamlet* in 1933. He was followed by the poets Tatyana Shchepkina-Kupernik, Mikhail Kuzmin, Mikhail Zenkevich and others. Shortly before the war, Boris Pasternak published his translation of *Hamlet* (1940). Later, the same poet



translated *Romeo and Juliet* and *Anthony and Cleopatra*. Finally, already during the war, another clever Shakespeare translator appeared in the person of Vassili Levik.

A comparison of the translations of the 18th and the 20th centuries, shows the following chief differences between them. The old school aimed at conveying the meaning of Shakespeare's text as a whole but at the same time they digressed considerably from his vocabulary, freely replacing his images and similes with their own.

The Soviet school of translators tries to give an absolutely exact version of Shakespeare's text, using his vocabulary, images and similes. Whereas, the translators of the 19th century adapted the style of their work to the esthetic tastes of the age, present-day translators avoid any modernization. While the old school of translators ignored the metric and rhythmic structure of Shakespearean verse, Soviet translators have developed the principles of "equilinearity" and "equi-rhythm", they try to convey Shakespeare's text in an equal number of Russian verses that conform to the rhythmic and metric features of the original. The greatest difficulty is the brevity of English words as compared to the Russian. This requires of the translator a perfect command of the language, a knowledge of synonyms and an ability to choose those Russian words which keep within the metre of the original. The striving after accurate translations naturally led to certain mistakes and failures. Some translators impoverished the original in their desire to observe the principles of equilinearity using nouns alone without any of Shakespeare's qualifying epithets. Criticism helped to reveal these shortcomings; Kornei Chukovsky frequently analyzed new translations of Shakespeare and devoted a considerable part of his book to the art of translation to this question.

The style of the new translators is by no means homogeneous. The more clearly expressed the poetical individuality of the translator the more individual the style of the translation. This is particularly noticeable in the translation of such a great poet as Boris Pasternak whose first translation of *Hamlet* did not come up to expectations. Everyone thought that Pasternak would produce his complicated and vague poetical style into Shakespeare's poetry. Instead, striving for maximum clarity, he simplified Shakespeare's text to some extent. The 19th century poet came under the powerful influence of Shakespeare's genius, and his work began to acquire characteristics formerly alien to it—the bold, courageous style and vivid eloquence of the Renaissance. A future study of Pasternak's verse will undoubtedly show that work on Shakespeare had a favourable influence on Pasternak's poetry.

Pasternak heads the "poetical" school of Shakespearean translators. There is another school which might be called "academic", whose leader is undoubtedly Lozinsky, an incomparable virtuoso in the field of exact translation who knows how to achieve this realism without losing the poetical style of the original.

The staging of Shakespeare's plays in Russia also has a long history and a new Shakespeare production is always regarded as an event for the Russian stage. Shakespeare's immortal characters served as the material for the development of the talent of many famous Russian actors. The prevailing style of each epoch laid its mark on the scenic interpretation of Shakespeare as it did on the translations.

In all the productions of the 18th and early 19th centuries the classic style predominated and in many ways closely resembled the French theatre of that epoch. At the beginning of the 19th century, the chief representatives of this style were Yakovlev and Semyonova who played Shakespeare's tragic heroes and heroines at the St. Petersburg Theatre. The traditions of this school also made themselves felt in the acting of Vassili Karatygin, one of the leading tragedians of the early 19th century, who won fame in the thirties and forties for his presentations of King Lear, Hamlet, Coriolanus and Othello.

The romantic style was best represented by the acting of the great Pavel Mochalov, a contemporary and rival of Karatygin. The English reader can get an idea of Mochalov's acting if we say that it resembled the style of Edmund Kean the Elder. A great event in Russian theatrical life in the thirties was the simultaneous production of *Hamlet* in Moscow and St. Petersburg. This was a battle between two schools of theatrical art—the classic and romantic. Karatygin starred in the St. Petersburg production, Mochalov appearing in Moscow. The public was also divided into two fractions, the Moscow literary group being headed by the critic Vissarion Belinsky who devoted a special article to Mochalov's performance.

During the second half of the century a new realistic tendency appeared in the scenic interpretation of Shakespeare.

The chief interpreter of this tendency was the Moscow Maly Theatre. In the middle of the century, the great realistic Russian actor Mikhail Shchepkin played the role of Polonius in a manner unknown to the traditions of classicism and romanticism. Shchepkin showed that Shakespeare's dramas provided fruitful material for comedians as well as tragedians. In the second half of the century Russian theatres first began to produce Shakespeare's comedies, including *Much Ado About Nothing* (1882), *The Taming of the Shrew* (1887) and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1887) at the Alexandrinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, and *The Taming of the Shrew* (1882) at the Moscow Maly Theatre.

Early in the 20th century, the newly formed Moscow Art Theatre took the lead in dramatic production staging *Julius Caesar* in 1903-1904 and *Hamlet* in 1911.

The October Revolution opened wide the doors of the theatre to the people as a whole and thus marked a new epoch in the history of the Russian theatre. Shakespeare's plays figured prominently on the billboards from the early years of the revolution. During

the Civil War, the Bolshoi Dramatic Theatre in Leningrad produced *Macbeth*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Julius Caesar* and *Twelfth Night*.

During the first ten years of Soviet rule, fourteen Shakespeare's plays were produced in Moscow and seen by half a million people. Lunacharsky, then People's Commissar of Education, said that in those years Shakespeare became the most popular playwright in the Soviet Union, and he has remained so ever since.

In the last fifteen years or so the number of theatres staging Shakespeare has greatly increased. Many peoples of the U.S.S.R., formerly unacquainted with Shakespeare, came to know the works of the great playwright; Uzbeks, Kirghiz, Tatars and other peoples saw Shakespeare productions in their native tongues on the stages of their national theatres.

With regard to actors, mention must be made in the first place of the great actress, Maria Ermolova, who has played sixteen Shakespeare's roles on the stage of the Maly Theatre. In her youth Ermolova was one of the best performers of the roles of Ophelia, Desdemona, Juliet. In later years she was brilliant as Lady Macbeth, Volumnia, Hermione and Queen Katherine.

Alexander Yuzhin, one of the greatest tragedians of the Maly Theatre in the early years of this century, created brilliant figures of Hamlet, Macbeth, Shylock, Othello and Richard III. The Leningrad actor Yuri Yuryev, who performed the same roles, was the last representative of the Karatygin school.

Vassili Kachalov is the greatest Shakespearean actor in the Art Theatre company. His Hamlet was a brilliant combination of wit, reflection and philosophical pessimism. An entirely different interpretation of Hamlet was given by Mikhail Chekhov who presented the Dane as a neurasthenic. Three brilliant performers of Othello must be mentioned: Leonidov in the Moscow Art Theatre, Ostuzhev in the Maly Theatre and the Armenian actor Vagram Papazyan. Mikhoels in the role of King Lear (in the Moscow Jewish Theatre) and Khorava and Vassadze as Othello and Iago in the Rust'veli Theatre in Georgia are the most outstanding players of Shakespearean roles in the national theatres of our country.

In the twenties, Soviet directors presented experimental and modernist productions of Shakespeare, such as Tairov's *Romeo and Juliet* in the Kamerny Theatre, and Akimov's *Hamlet* in the Vakhtangov Theatre, but in the next decade, realistic and psychological interpretations of Shakespeare gained the upper hand, as was seen in the production of *Othello* in the Maly Theatre in 1936, *The Taming of the Shrew* at the Red Army Theatre in 1938 and *Romeo and Juliet* at the Theatre of the Revolution in 1935. This line of interpretation has been followed in the Soviet theatre for the past ten years. This season the repertoires of Moscow theatres include *Othello*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *King Lear*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *A Comedy of Errors*, *As You Like It*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Taming of the Shrew*.

So much has been written about Shakespeare in Russia that a mere enumeration of critical books and essays would fill a book.

The first Russian criticisms of Shakespeare's works were those of Sumarokov who, in his own words "found much that was good and much that was bad in Shakespeare." A supporter of classicism, he could not forgive the English writer his disregard of the three unities.

Karamzin, leader of the sentimental school, was the first Russian writer to defend Shakespeare against the attacks of classicism. In his introduction to his translation of *Julius Caesar* he wrote: "Few writers probed so deeply into human nature as Shakespeare, few understood so well all the hidden springs of nature in man, his innermost feelings, the distinguishing feature of every passion, every temperament and every form of life, as did this artist. All his human portraits are a direct reflection of nature. . . Every type of man, every age, every passion, every character finds specific expression. He discovers a mode for every thought, an expression for every sentiment, the best possible exposition for each stirring of the soul."

At the beginning of the 19th century, with the establishment of romanticism in literature, the interest in Shakespeare grew in literary circles and amongst the reading public, with the result that a large number of articles devoted to the English playwright appeared in Russian periodicals. All these articles presented Shakespeare as being very near in spirit to French romanticism. Pushkin protested against this romanticist interpretation of Shakespeare. Realism and understanding of the people—these are the two features which particularly attracted Pushkin to Shakespeare. "I am firmly convinced," wrote the Russian poet, "that the popular laws of Shakespeare's dramas are eminently suited to our theatre."

Pushkin left numerous writings on Shakespeare which reveal to us both his opinion of the English playwright and his understanding of dramatic art in general. "Dramatic art," according to Pushkin, "arose in the public square for the edification of the people." Drama helped to maintain this contact with the people; plays should not be written for a narrow circle of refined critics, but for the masses of the people for whom Shakespeare wrote. For a drama to attract the people its content must conform with their interests.

Pushkin wrote: "What does a tragedy reveal? What is its aim? The individual and the people. The fate of the individual and the fate of the people. . . That is why Shakespeare is great, despite his unevenness, carelessness and unpolished style."

To write for the people, in Pushkin's opinion, did not mean to simplify the tasks of art, to resort to crude effects and impoverish the content. On the contrary, only an art, profoundly ideological, could be of a truly popular nature. Therefore, he wrote: "What does a dramatist need? Philosophy, objectivity, the political understanding of a historian, perspicacity, a lively imagina-



tion, no prejudices in favour of a pet idea. "freedom." All these qualities Pushkin found in Shakespeare.

The Russian poet particularly valued Shakespeare's realism in depicting human character. Comparing the style of French classicism with Shakespeare's realism, Pushkin said: "The characters created by Shakespeare are not like Molière's, types personifying a certain passion or vice, but living creatures filled to the brim with many passions, many vices; their different and many-sided characters are revealed to the spectator through the course of circumstances." In confirmation of this thought, Pushkin compared Molière's *Miser* with Shakespeare's Hamlet and drew a comparison between both writers' treatment of a hypocrite. Pushkin also gave a very interesting characterization of Falstaff.

In the thirties of the 19th century, Shakespeare was already included in the literature programmes of universities, and Stepan Shchegolev, lecturer at Moscow University, devoted considerable space to the English playwright in his *History of Poetry* published in 1835. Shakespeare also formed the subject of writings by such professors as Ivan Davydov and the critic Ivan Kroneberg, one of the writers most energetic in the popularization of Shakespeare in the thirties.

Later the cudgel was taken up by the classic Russian critic Vissarion Belinsky. In his essays, Belinsky usually dealt with a number of the most important questions of literary development, but his leit-motif was the defense of the principles of realism in art. Belinsky based his struggle for realism both on the best works of Russian literature and on Shakespeare. Most of his articles contain the mention of Shakespeare. Always and everywhere he regarded the latter as the poet of realism, a universal genius, the creator of some of the greatest characters in the drama. Belinsky gives us comprehensive analyses of *Romeo and Juliet*, *King Lear*, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, *The Tempest*, *Henry IV* and so on. Belinsky's favourite was *Hamlet*. He constantly refers to this play and wrote three essays on it, of which the most interesting is *Shakespeare's Drama and Mochalov's Role of Hamlet*. This is a detailed analysis of Shakespeare's masterpiece, carried out with brilliant critical skill. The analysis of the tragedy is accompanied by a description of the performance of the Prince of Denmark by the actor Mochalov, for Belinsky was not only interested in the ideological side of Shakespeare's work but also in its stage presentation.

At the time when Belinsky wrote his article, the favourite interpretation of Hamlet is that given by Goethe in *Wilhelm Meister's Lehrjahre*. As we know, the author of *Werther* considered Hamlet a man of weak will, but Belinsky affirmed that Hamlet was naturally a strong man. "Hamlet is no weak, powerless creature when inner conviction calls for firm action, even when it is necessary to destroy people, only the hatred they engender provides sufficient strength to work this destruction." Hamlet's moments of weakness, in the opinion of the critic "are only temporary. They

are only stages in the spiritual development of the hero who eventually overcomes his indecision. But even these moments of weakness experienced by the Prince of Denmark should not be held against him. They are a manifestation of a profound nature striving to understand its environment; in them the full powerful mind of Hamlet, the analyst, is displayed." That is why Belinsky states that Hamlet is great and strong even in his weakness.

In the middle of the century, special studies of individual works of Shakespeare began to appear. Important amongst these were Novikov's work on *Julius Caesar* (1857) and that of Yaroslavtsev on *Hamlet* (1865).

Criticism of Shakespeare in Russia was never separated from the general development of esthetic thought. Nikolai Chernyshevsky, disciple of Belinsky and well-known Russian critic, also devoted much attention to the study of Shakespeare. Of greatest interest are Chernyshevsky's remarks on the nature of tragedies.

In his classic work *The Esthetic Relations of Art to Reality* (1853-1855) Chernyshevsky, supporting the principles of materialistic esthetics, sharply criticized the esthetics of German idealism. In particular, he objected to the theory of the German esthetics who maintained that tragic heroes are always ruined by their own tragic guilt. "This is often true," writes Chernyshevsky, "but not always. . . . Surely Desdemona did not cause her own death? Anyone can see that Iago's evil machinations caused her destruction. Surely Romeo and Juliet were not guilty of causing the catastrophe that overtook them? Of course, if we insist on seeing a criminal in everyone who perishes, we can accuse them all. Desdemona is guilty of being innocent in mind and heart and, therefore, she could not foresee the slander; Romeo and Juliet are guilty of loving each other. . . ."

Criticizing the theory of tragic guilt, Chernyshevsky polemizes with Hegel and Fisher, the most prominent representatives of German idealistic esthetics in the first half of the 19th century. Chernyshevsky exercised a vast influence on Russian criticism of Shakespeare, indicating the road to independent esthetic appraisal of the problem of tragedy in Shakespeare's works. He also dealt with the problem of comedy, devoting a very interesting work, *The Sublime and the Ridiculous*, to this question. It is interesting to note here that in discussing the principles of comedy Chernyshevsky referred to Shakespeare, analyzing his jesters and Falstaff.

Another Russian classic critic, Nikolai Dobrolyubov, also had many interesting ideas on Shakespeare.

Speaking of the high role of art, Dobrolyubov said: "That which philosophers only surmise in theory, great writers are able to see in life and represent in action. They are the most absolute representatives of the highest degree of human understanding in a given epoch and they review the lives of men from this height, picture them for us: they must take their places in the ranks of historical public figures who help humanity to a fuller understanding of its vital forces and natural tendencies. Such was Shake-

spere. Many of his plays can be called revelations of the human heart; his literary work helped to raise the general knowledge of people several rungs higher up the ladder than anybody had risen before him and which had only been distantly indicated by certain philosophers. That is why Shakespeare is of worldwide significance."

In 1860, Ivan Turgenev addressed the "Society of Russian Literature Amateurs" on *Hamlet and Don Quixote*; this address was published later and made a profound impression on Russian society. The author of *Rudin* and *Fathers and Sons* submitted a new conception which differed from the generally accepted opinion of the hero of Shakespeare's tragedy. Comparing Don Quixote with Hamlet, Turgenev said that these were the two basic types of mankind in general, Don Quixote being the incarnation of altruism and heroism and Hamlet of egoism and scepticism. Turgenev's paradoxical definition of Hamlet aroused many protests, as it represented an arbitrary interpretation of Shakespeare's hero. A much more truthful explanation of Hamlet was given by another Russian realist, Ivan Goncharov, author of *Oblomov*, whose essay on this play was published only after his death.

In 1864, Russia celebrated the 300th anniversary of Shakespeare's birthday. A special conference was held in St. Petersburg, at which Turgenev read a lecture on the world significance of Shakespeare, and Professor Galakhov spoke of the treatment of Shakespeare's works in Russia. A paper on Shakespeare was read in Moscow University by Professor Tikhonravov; this brilliant essay on Shakespeare was eventually published.

In the second half of the 19th century the study of Shakespeare became more widespread in Russia. The leader of the Russian Shakespeareans was Professor Nikolai Storozhenko, of the Moscow University (1836-1906), whose first work *Shakespeare's Predecessors* (1872) was a comprehensive study of the English drama in which the central place was devoted to an analysis of the works of Lyly and Marlowe. Storozhenko devoted his second monograph to Robert Green (1878). This was the first monographic study of this predecessor of Shakespeare. It was translated into English and printed as an introduction to the Grossart's edition of Green's works. The New Shakespeare Society in England elected Storozhenko as one of its vice-presidents. Later, the Russian scholar published the following studies: *Shakespearean Criticism in Germany*, *The Psychology of Love and Devotion in Shakespeare's Works*, *Macbeth*, *Prototypes of Falstaff*, *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, *Shakespeare and the Culture of the Renaissance* and *The Shakespeare-Bacon Controversy*. Storozhenko was also the first in Russia to read a special course of lectures on Shakespeare in the university, these being later published in a lithographed edition. The course is a comprehensive monograph in four parts: the history of Shakespearean criticism, the life of Shakespeare, an analysis of Shakespeare's entire plays, and a general characterization of Shakespeare's poetical genius. Owing to the fact that this work was published in a limited number of copies it

did not become widely popular, but its scientific value is enormous.

Early in his career Storozhenko sharply criticized the German idealistical approach to Shakespeare, thus continuing the work begun by Chernyshevsky.

Essays on Shakespeare's plays, published in the Works of Shakespeare under the editorship of Vengerov (1902-1905) were written by the famous Russian critics and literary scholars Faddei Zelinsky, Mikhail Rozanov, Alexander Gornfeld, Zinaida Vengerova, Lev Shepelevich, Evgeni Anichkov, Vladimir Spasovich, Fyodor Braun, Vsevolod Miller, Pyotr Morozov, Alexander Kirpichnikov and Yuri Veselovsky. Each of these essays is a complete research on the given play, and they have retained their importance to this day.

In addition we must point out that beginning with the second half of the 19th century, a large number of separate articles and books on Shakespeare began to appear. Very many reviews are devoted to *Hamlet*. In addition to the above-mentioned classic articles by Belinsky and Turgenev's study, over fifty articles by Russian authors are known to have been written on this tragedy. Of these the most interesting are: A. Yaroslavtsev—*On the Personality of Hamlet* (1865); Vladimir Spasovich—*Shakespeare's Hamlet* (1883); Ivan Ivanov—*Hamlet* (1891); Nikolai Tikhomirov—*A Critical Analysis of Ulrici's Opinion of Hamlet* (1897); Sergei Makhalov—*A Fantasy on the Tragedy of Hamlet* (1897); Anna Frischmut—*More About Hamlet* (1901); Mikhail Rozanov—*Hamlet* (1903); Sergei Razumovsky—*The Apotheosis of the Will* (1911); S. Atair-Rudneva—*The Eternal Riddle; A New Opinion of Hamlet* (1917); Ivan Aksenov—*Hamlet* (1927); Isaak Nussinov—*Hamlet* (1937).

An interesting contribution to Russian Shakespeare critical works was Lev Shestov's book *Shakespeare and His Critic Brandes* published in 1898. After a detailed review of the Danish scientist's book, Shestov gives his own analysis of Shakespeare's most important works, which is a model of Russian philosophical and romantic criticism of the end of the 19th century.

After the October Revolution, Russian criticism of Shakespeare's works took on a new colour. Works appear which strive to apply the methods of social analysis to Shakespeare's art. In 1926, Vladimir Friche published his book on Shakespeare, in which he tried to prove that the great playwright acted as representative of the nobility in his works. This approach to Shakespeare was supported by Professor Pyotr Kogan in his book *William Shakespeare* (1931). This point of view was opposed by Alexander Smirnov who, in his book *The Art of Shakespeare* maintains that in his world-outlook Shakespeare was a representative of the bourgeois humanism of the Renaissance period. In a number of later studies, Smirnov lays less stress on the bourgeois nature of the great playwright's works and emphasizes Shakespeare's humanism (see his article *Shakespeare* published in the edition of Shakespeare's Selected Works in 1939). This approach to Shakespeare as a humanist of the Renaissance period has become the established one



Soviet criticism of the present time, and rutes the vulgar-sociological treatment of iche and Kogan.

Anatoli Lunacharsky was an outstanding author of a number of articles on the English playwright in which the main emphasis is id on the poetical nature of the latter's ys. In the article published in the Great iet Encyclopedia (vol. 62, 1933), Luna- rsky strove to achieve an organic combin- on of social and esthetic criticism. In this was most successful in the study *Francis on Surrounded by Shakespeare's Characters*, ich was published after his death; in this ay Lunacharsky displayed great feeling his analysis of Shakespeare's plays against e background of the general spirit of the ial and cultural life of the Renaissance. Among researches devoted to the theatre e Shakespearean epoch, the best are illiam Müller's book *The Drama and the eatre of Shakespeare's Epoch* (1925) and exander Bulgakov's *The London Theatre eatrical Circles in the 16th-17th Centuries* (19).

During the past fifteen years much has n written about Shakespeare. In addition Professor Smirnov, another Leningrad lar, Constantine Derzhavin, has published small but very detailed book, *Shakespeare*, 1936. Speaking of the approach to kespeare in the Soviet Union, Derzhavin es:

We advance and warmly support the an of the most complete, most profound y of the legacy left to world culture and y Shakespeare, just as we regard our alist culture in the light of the direct ver of all the best that has been created e leading representatives of humanity ll time. While engaged in creating the e of socialist realism in our art and in e theatre, we learn from Shakespeare, n his powerful realistic expressiveness, e profound psychological definitions, his ity to solve the greatest philosophical oblems in dramatic form and in living ges. We love Shakespeare for his bold d, his wise knowledge of life, his love emankind, his realistic genius, full of ound thought and deep emotion, always lutely truthful and emanating real

In 1937, a book was published by Ivan enov, consisting of his previously publish- articles and containing a general analysis

of Shakespeare as well as studies on *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet* and the chronicles. Inci- dentally it must be mentioned here, that Aksenov was a supporter of Robertson's theory, which makes itself felt in his article on *Romeo and Juliet*. Boris Baratonov has devoted a comprehensive article to Shake- speare's chronicles, which was published in the magazine *The Theatre* in 1938. In the same year Professor Alexei Jiveilegov pub- lished a work of research: *Shakespeare and Italy*. At the end of the thirties, various magazines carried numerous articles on Shakespeare, written by Soviet critics. Here we must speak of Professor Mikhail Morozov, tireless in his efforts to popularize Shake- speare. Morozov's speciality is Shakespeare and the Theatre, and in 1939 he published a book *Famous Actors in Shakespearean Roles* containing much interesting information on the performance of Shakespeare roles by West-European and Russian actors. In 1941 appeared his *Comments on Shakespeare's Plays* intended as a guidebook for theatres staging Shakespeare's plays. Several produ- cers have carried out similar work. Nikolai Gorchakov has written studies on *Othello* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1937). Alexei Popov and Pavel Urbanovich on *The Taming of the Shrew* (1940). Works of this type closely resemble the well-known *Intro- ductions* of Granville-Barker, but are abso- lutely independent in content. Among the latest works on Shakespeare there is the chapter in the recently published volume of *The History of English Literature* written by Pro- fessor Mikhail Morozov, and a study of *Othello* published by Naum Berkovsky, a Leningrad professor, in 1946. Joseph Yuzov- sky must be mentioned amongst the theatre critics writing on Shakespeare. His articles on *Romeo and Juliet*, *King Lear*, *Othello* and *Hamlet*, which appeared in various magazines are of great interest as a combination of theat- rical and literary criticism.

Soviet criticism on Shakespeare is distin- guished by its wide range: Soviet critics are interested in the most varied questions—the social meaning of Shakespeare's works, his artistic methods, the psychology of his heroes, the history of the theatre and the drama of his epoch, problems of chronology and texts.

The contributions made by both the old and the new Russian criticism to the study of Shakespeare deserve to be widely known.

ALEXANDER ANIKST

## MAYAKOVSKY AND SANDBURG

When describing his first journey abroad Mayakovsky was asked to give his reasons for going.

"Why do writers go usually abroad?" he asked. "They go to be astonished. I went to astonish."

Yes, Mayakovsky astonished his interlocutors abroad by describing what was happening on one-sixth of the earth's surface, the changes which had taken place and how people lived in the new way. "I even had quite a queue..." he wrote later. "From the road-sweeper in Haal and the hotel porter to journalists and deputies...."

And it was the same thing, not only on the first journey, but every time Mayakovsky crossed the Soviet borders, whether in Europe or across the ocean.

But, of course, it sometimes happened that he, himself, was astonished. He was dumbfounded by questions which, it seemed to him, could only reasonably be asked by a man who had descended from another planet. He was not only amazed by the scantiness of the knowledge but sometimes by an apparent reluctance to gain true and accurate information.

In one of the American papers Mayakovsky's attention was caught by a news item beneath the sensational heading *A Snake's Eggs in Moscow*. He cut out this paragraph and brought it home with him as an example of the kind of information with which some of the American papers still fed their readers.

Besides this cutting Mayakovsky brought from America two books—a book of poems and a book of sketches, *My Discovery of America*.

Now, Mayakovsky not only regarded it as his duty to astonish the Americans with descriptions of the Soviet Union but also, as the first Soviet poet to visit America, to tell his own readers what he had seen there. And these two books are well known and treasured by Soviet readers.

There was yet one more book which Mayakovsky brought with him across the ocean—a book well known in America—Carl Sandburg's collected poems *Smoke and Steel* (New York, 1921).

Carl Sandburg is one of America's greatest poets and his fame was at its height in the twenties, so it is not surprising that the book attracted Mayakovsky's notice.

In his American sketches Mayakovsky quotes Sandburg's famous poem about Chicago and compares it with his own fantastic description of Chicago in his poem *One Hundred and Fifty Million* (1920). Mayakovsky expressed the obvious sympathy he felt for Sandburg in the course of an interview on the cultural and literary life in America which was printed in one of the Soviet pa-

pers and spoke about him again when giving his impressions of America.

But of what use were Sandburg's poems to Mayakovsky if he did not know English? Why did he bring the book back with him?

To give it to one of his friends who could read and appreciate it?

No, Mayakovsky didn't give the book to anybody... It is lying before me at this very moment. Someone has indicated certain poems with a cross, but the pages of this book also give undoubted proof that it has been in the hands of Mayakovsky.

Here is the first verse of the opening poem

Smoke of the fields in spring is one,  
Smoke of the leaves in autumn another  
Smoke of a steel-mill roof or a battle  
ship funnel  
They all go up in a line with a smoke  
stack  
Or they twist... in the slow twist...  
of the wind

And further on, in Mayakovsky's minute handwriting we find the Russian translation of single words written between the lines in pencil.

What for? Surely not for the purpose of translation!

We have every right to be surprised for with Mayakovsky's exceptionally keen and vivid feeling for language, his active use of words in his poetical works, the phonetics or intonation of any poem must seem to him unreplicable in any other language system.

Words for him were not just "small change" for his thoughts but individual elements of form emotionally coloured by sounds and intonations. He even took phrases from the common every-day speech of France and England and smelted them into his own poems without translating them and without trying to reproduce their rhythmic and phonetical colouring to Russian speech.

Yes, Mayakovsky seriously regarded the translation of poetry so difficult as to be almost impossible, which makes the case of Sandburg all the more interesting.

As far as we know this was the only case—not of translation, for it evidently never came to that—that Mayakovsky considered the work of a foreign poet with idea of translation.

This stands out as one of the remarkable details in the literary biography of this outstanding Russian poet of the 20th century, remarkable in that such an interest, rare to Mayakovsky, should have been shown in the author of *Chicago Poems*.

VASSILI KATANYAN



## NEW BOOKS

### STANISLAVSKY ON SHAKESPEARE.

C. S. Stanislavsky. *Producer's*  
*an of Othello*. State Art  
ublishing House. Moscow. 392  
ges.

A book has recently appeared  
Moscow that will attract all  
to treasure the great heritage  
Shakespeare. It is unusual  
form and content and the  
ory of its origin is also unusual.  
On October 29th, 1928, the  
th birthday of the Moscow  
lt Theatre, Stanislavsky played the role of  
rshinin in Chekhov's *Three Sisters*. This  
is his last stage appearance for he was taken  
during that very performance. In May,  
1929, when the acute stage of the illness  
passed, he went to Nice on doctor's  
ers. There on the Mediterranean shore,  
from his friends, from the theatre, he  
ndered over an unfinished work, an old  
om of his, to stage *Othello*. Taking up his  
he there and then compiled a detailed  
ducer's plan of this tragedy.

That is how the book, finished in 1930,  
e into existence. On the left-hand page is  
akespeare's text, on the right Stanislav-  
s commentaries, opposite the part of  
ch character. Sometimes they develop  
to several pages without a break. Stanislavsky  
resorted to an unusual form of in-  
rted short stories in order to describe the  
t of Othello, Iago, Cassio and Roderico,  
what occurs between the acts: he expresses  
thoughts on the tragedy and closely fol-  
ws the conflict of passions in the human soul.  
Stanislavsky's ideas about Shakespeare  
ve taken the precise form of literary com-  
entary.

Stanislavsky wanted the settings for Othel-  
to be mounted on a revolving stage and  
the scenes to follow each other without  
ervals. At the same time the producer  
rned against exaggerating the effect by  
o much mechanical smoothness, against  
nsferring the production of the play "to  
other plane", one that has now become  
traordinarily vulgar, namely the plane  
the German theatre.



Drawing by Constantine Stanislavsky

Stanislavsky held that modern stage tech-  
nique should be so employed as to show the  
sweeping scope of Shakespeare's tragedies  
without being cramped by unity of time and  
place.

The first act has been given an extensive  
commentary. Following his usual method,  
Stanislavsky wanted the actor to feel his  
part, identify himself with his hero, gain a  
clear idea of his fate, his past life and character  
and only then, with this as a basis, deter-  
mine his stage behaviour. Who are Rode-  
rico, Iago and Brabantio?—he asks, and  
then goes on to dwell in detail on the charac-  
ters of the first scene. Concluding his intro-  
duction to the tragedy, Stanislavsky notes  
that "the first scene is not a simple, tranquil  
exposition of the play as it is usually inter-  
preted... the scene is vitally essential.  
It immediately and clearly delineates the  
villainous part of Iago, who, throughout the  
act, carries on his intrigue and campaign of  
vengeance against Othello and all he holds  
dear."

As the playgoer knows, he makes his  
first acquaintance with Othello in the second  
scene. Stanislavsky considered it essential  
"to depict Othello at the beginning of his  
love epic in the image of Romeo, so as to  
bring out the contrast to the tragic finale of  
his romance." In this scene Stanislavsky  
conceives him as big, swarthy, and naive;  
carrying an enormous bunch of flowers,  
jolly, light-hearted and kind.

Of special significance in understanding  
Othello is the following passage from Stanislavsky's work: "The hardest thing in play-  
ing Othello is the accumulative growth of  
doubt, changing not into jealousy, as all  
think—Othello is not jealous—but ripening  
into the resolve to destroy the spawn of hell  
in the shape of beauty, that is Desdemona."

In Shakespeare's immortal work Stanislavsky sees the profanation of the ideal, the wreck of faith in man's benevolence. In this he follows the traditional Russian interpretation of Othello. Was it not Pushkin who, a century ago, wrote: "Othello is not jealous by nature, on the contrary, he is confiding."

It is characteristic that in our day this point of view should begin to predominate in the Soviet theatre. It accords with the endeavour to make the character of the great Moor more profound, more human, to invest it with the true Shakespearean scope. Stanislavsky, too, in this commentary more than



Drawing by Constantine Stanislavsky

once underscores: "The man of petty jealousy as Othello is usually portrayed should be Iago . . . Othello possesses a soul of remarkable nobility."

"The score of passions" given by Stanislavsky is drawn up with all the brilliance of the mature producer. "Never do man's passions and emotions develop steadily in unbroken continuity," observes Stanislavsky, and in another place he says: "Man's emotions rise, then subside a little, to rise again still higher. Jealousy develops in stages as in the soul of Othello."

Stanislavsky also interprets in a profound and interesting way Desdemona, Iago and the other characters of the tragedy.

Stanislavsky's plan for Othello is a substantial addition to his theoretical works like *My Life in Art* and *The Actor's Self-Improvement*, known the world over.

There is no doubt that Stanislavsky's new book, illustrated with Alexander Golovin's excellent drawings and the author's own sketches, will win the recognition of wide circles of readers united in their love of Shakespeare and the art of the theatre in general.

#### NEW TURKMENIAN BOOKS

Makhtum-Kuly-Fragi. *Selected Poems*. State Literary Publishing House. Moscow. 288 pages. Russian translation from the Turkmenian by G. Shengely. Introduction by E. A. Bertels, corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R.

*Poetry of Turkmenia*. Poems chosen by Pyotr Skosyrev, Soviet Writer Publishing House, Moscow, 94 pages.

Pyotr Skosyrev. *Turkmenian Literature*. Soviet Writer Publishing House. Moscow. 154 pages.

The pages of these three books convey the true flavour of Turkmenia, vivid and colourful, varied and amazing like her famous carpets.

Until the October Revolution the Turkmenians were a neglected people. The Black or Evil Desert of Kara-Kum occupied 93% of Turkmenia's territory. Literacy among the population amounted to a fraction of one percent. The people had no schools, no newspapers, no alphabet even. Nevertheless, they had their literature, rich poetry, lyric, epic and satirical; clever short stories and even lengthy novels. The Turkmenians created not only folklore but an extensive oral literature by dozens of authors.

The most ancient epic of Turkmenian folklore is a heroic novel, *Ker-Ogly* (*Son of the Grave*), belonging to the 14th to 16th centuries. Ker-Ogly is the Turkmenians' Robin Hood. A hundred years ago the prominent British orientalist Hodsko wrote that there wasn't a corner of Asia where the name of Ker-Ogly was not to be heard and that if the popularity of a literary work was to be judged by the number of its readers then Firdausi is no more famous in the East than Ker-Ogly.

Who are the people who have preserved for us both the epic and the vast and varied works by different individuals? With the Turkmenians such a "living-library" is

called the Bakhshi, a wandering minstrel and story-teller, and often enough a poet.

Turkmenians have had contact with many lands of the Orient. They became acquainted with Iranian and Arabian classic poetry. Some Turkmenians were educated at colleges in Khiva and Bokhara.

Turkmenian poetry reached its zenith towards the end of the 18th century. The founder of Turkmenian poetry, its pioneer and mentor of succeeding poets was Makhtum-Kuly-Fragi (1733—1782). The people memorized and have handed down his longer poems and a considerable number of shorter stanzas—about 16 thousand lines in all. His works are varied and display all kinds of poetic style. Makhtum-Kuly was one of the most erudite men of his age, a poet philosopher. His works will compare with such classics of Oriental poetry as Omar Khayyam, Nava'i, Firdausi and Nizami.

Fragi painted in vivid colours nature and the varied aspects of life in Turkmenia. The poet calls for an end to the inter-tribal strife. He creates the figure of the ideal Jigit (the warrior, a knight of Central Asia). His ardent songs, charged with passionate love of his people might be considered the voice of Turkmenia's conscience.

Molla Nepes was a remarkable lyrical poet of the early 19th century. His poems *Branded Fists*, *Beloved*, *You and I Alone* and others are sung to this day in Turkmenia. His best work, though, is the love story *Zukhra and Takhir*. The love of beautiful Zukhra and handsome Takhir has always been a subject dear to the peoples of Turkmenia, but Molla Nepes was the first to make it the subject of a work of genuine literature.

The warrior poets, Zelil and Seidi, who sang of chivalry and patriotism are widely known, as are Magruppi, author of the novel *Yusup and Akhmet*, Shabenue with his tuneful verse and complex subjects, Ganbi, the tender lyricist, restrained Ashik and finally Kemine, the merry vagabond, whose very life has become a legend.

The Soviet period of Turkmenian poetry begins with the name of Durdy-Klich, the blind bard (Shahir). Durdy-Klich took up the cudgels in defense of liberty and his remarkable talent disturbed the enemies of the Revolution. Jinaid, head of a band of Basmachi (bandits) kidnapped Durdy-Klich and cruelly tortured him. Nevertheless the blind bard managed to escape and joining a Red Army detachment, he took an active part in combatting the Basmachi. When the country was rid of them he devoted his talent to singing the praises of the Soviet order. Well known, too, are the blind Shahirs Nura Annaklich and Ata-Salikh. They sharply respond to the significant events in the life of their people. Their songs, composed without paper or pen, are broadcast over the radio and printed in newspapers and magazines. During the war the voices of both poets resounded in marching songs and appeals to the people.

The outstanding representative of contemporary Turkmenian written literature founded only in the Soviet era is Berdy Kerbabaiyev. A connoisseur of the old poetry of the Orient, he knew that the progress of his own



erature depended upon how it could absorb the traditions of Russian and Western literature. Berdy Kerbabaiev writes in various genres. During the war years he wrote war plays, two scenarios, the second volume of his novel *The Decisive Steps*, several short stories, a substantial number of poems and his long novel in verse *Ailor*. With *The Decisive Steps* Berdy Kerbabaiev has initiated Turkmenian prose literature. In this book he describes the life of his country during the past 30 years. We should also mention such authors who were writing at the time Soviet power was crystallizing in Turkmenia, as Durdy Abdurdy, Rakhmet Seidov, Ishan Esenov, Ata Niyazov, Gara-Seitliev, Pomma Nurberdiyev, Atan Kekilov, Shalikilov, Hoja Shukurov, and Keman Ishanov. Their chief theme is the struggle between the old customs and the new life, collective farming in Turkmenia, her industrial development and cultural progress. The books mentioned here show how the literature of Soviet Turkmenia is developing and flourishing.

### EARLY RUSSIAN LITERATURE

Academician A. S. Orlov. *Early Russian Literature from the 11th to 17th Centuries*. Academy of Sciences Publishing House. Moscow. 340 pages.

Professor A. S. Orlov is one of the leading experts on early Russian literature. His book is an adaptation of lectures read at the Lenin Institute of History, Philosophy and Linguistics in 1934—1935.

The author considers his chief task to be that of a chronological review of the most valuable and typical examples of early Russian literature from the 11th to the 17th centuries. Each lecture reviews an outstanding specimen of old Russian writing. The numerous happily chosen excerpts, the lively and impressive manner of exposition, the analysis of distinguishing features of style give a striking and complete conception of the literature of ancient Russia: Chety-Minei (Lives of the Saints), the legends of Gerasim the Lion, Tajse and others. The Counsels of Yaroslav and Vladimir Monomakh to their children, the Lives of the Princes Boris and Gleb, and Sergei Radonezhsky, annals, tales about Alexander Nevsky, the Tatar invasion, the Stoglav, correspondence between Ivan Grozny and Prince Kurbsky, political pamphlets of the 16th century and so on—these are the specimens of Russian writing which the author analyzes. In the process he relates stories of the most outstanding characters dealt with by the work under review (Maxim Grek, Ivan Grozny, Prince Kurbsky, Ivan Peresvetov, etc.), and assesses their importance as pioneers of Russian culture. Excellence of style and the wealth of factual material make this volume not only an ideal



A miniature of the 14th century. Ancient Russian warriors on march

textbook but also a most valuable guide to early Russian literature.

### A BOOK ABOUT SCIENTISTS

A. Popovsky. *Inspired Research Workers*. Soviet Writer Publishing House. Moscow. 285 pages.

The heroes of Alexander Popovsky's book are doctors, physiologists, and biologists. "Behind the dry lines of scientific dissertation," he writes, "the emotions of the authors cannot be discerned; they are concealed by the curtain of scientific facts. Let us place the story in its true light, tell it the way it really occurred." And proceeding to do this, Popovsky acquaints us with the striking figures of scientists, eccentrics and enthusiasts, and along with their biographies, gives what might be termed the biography of scientific research, the story of its difficulties, set-backs, failures and achievements.

In previous books (*The Laws of Life* and *The Laws of Birth*) Popovsky told us of Pavlov, Gurvich, Bykov, Speransky and Lyssenko. In his new book *Inspired Research Workers*, the author gives the biographies of Evgeni Pavlovsky, the parasitologist, and Alexander Vishnevsky, the surgeon, both prominent Soviet scientists.

Academician Pavlovsky is an expert on insect-borne diseases. The heroes of the first story are himself and his devoted colleagues, Professor Petrishcheva, winner of a Stalin Prize, who has repeatedly inoculated herself with dangerous diseases, Doctor Latyshev, spending his honeymoon in the desert, to run to earth a breeding ground of pendinka (leishmanioza), parasitologists and microbiologists who sacrifice their lives in the struggle against the parasite disease carriers.

Professor A. Vishnevsky, the surgeon, is well known both in this country and abroad. He has invented a truly wonder-working agent, the novocaine block. "He has evolved a method of anaesthesia," writes Popovsky, "that can save the life of a patient whether the operation be done in the best of operating theatres or on a deal table by the light

of an oil lamp. A lucky chance helped him to make a means of producing insensibility into an agent of cure and diagnosis . . . " The method helped cure wounds during the war. He has cured erysipelas, chronic forms of dysentery, ulcerated legs and appendicitis.

Popovsky tells us something of the man: "His father was a retired army officer. He was a backward pupil, sang treble in the church choir, devoured literature from the artillery library and finished gymnasium (high school) with poor marks. Before he had been away from school a year he had forgotten every single word he had learned of Latin and Greek."

This unpromising beginning, as we see, did not prevent the backward schoolboy from becoming a foremost scientist.

How did he succeed? seems a fair question. "Never for a single minute did I think of anything but my anaesthesia."

It sounds somewhat exaggerated but it is pretty near the mark.

The men Popovsky writes of, Vishnevsky among them, are single-minded folk, fanatics of science, sacrificing everything for their work, promoting the welfare of man.

#### A BOOK ON LERMONTOV

Nikolai Brodsky. *M. U. Lermontov*. Biography. State Literary Publishing House. Moscow. 347 pages.

Brodsky's latest book about Lermontov deals with the period 1814—1832 in the life and work of this Russian poet and contains a great deal of specific scientific material. Thanks to its lively and popular style the book will interest the general reader as well as the expert.

Brodsky builds up the image of the poet and his milieu, using numerous items from the archives and from memoirs. He describes Lermontov's acquaintances, his teachers and university friends.

The author shows how various impressions of boyhood and youth affected the development of Lermontov's character, the formation of his outlook and the progress of his talent for poetry. He examines the poet's maiden efforts and compares them with the works of his predecessors, shows the influence on Lermontov of the insurgent poetry of Polezhayev and the philosophical lyrics of Tyutchev.

The author reviews the accepted ideas of Lermontov's Byronism and compares him with the French Byronists, stresses the difference in the case of the Russian poet who does not imitate Byron, but pays homage to him as the bard of liberty and champion against tyranny.

The book has some interesting analyses of a number of Lermontov's poems.

In the chapter on the Moscow University, Brodsky cites hitherto little-known documents from the archives to give some exceptionally valuable information on the existence of a student circle led by Lermontov; through this circle the young men came into active contact with the progressive ideas of the period.

The author shows that Lermontov's ideas are in accord with the founders of Russian revolutionary-democratic thought, Belinsky and Herzen.

Brodsky views the poet not in isolation but as a son of his times and people. He sets out to show the development of Lermontov's personality and work in living contact with the social conflicts of his day.

#### ARMENIAN NOVELETTES

*Armenian Novelettes*. Compiled by Y. Khachariants. Soviet Writer Publishing House. Moscow. 250 pages.

This book is a collection of 40 novelettes by seventeen Armenian authors, beginning with classics of the 19th century like Zokhrab Shirvanzade and ending with young writers like Bigen Hachumian, born in 1917.

The novelettes reflect the life not only of present-day Soviet Armenia but of Armenian lands and settlements in the East and the West.

The compiler set himself the task of "producing in art form an encyclopedia of Armenian life," and he has certainly succeeded in embracing a wide circle of themes. One can find in the collection descriptions of the customs of the Turko-Armenian provinces and of the countryside in pre-revolutionary Russian Armenia, descriptions of the life of the intelligentsia, battle scenes, pictures from nature, the hunt and the peasant family, and finally, stories about the Patriotic War against German fascism.

The novelettes are varied in type. The psychological novelette predominates in the work of the classics; there are also satires, as for instance, the excerpt from Akop Paronian's well-known story *The Venerable Beggar*, *The Poet Without the Muses*, or Shirvanzade's short story *Comrade*. Ovanes Tumanian, the classic, is represented by a lyric novelette, the modern master Avetik Isaakian, by a philosophical romantic novelette and with it a Gasconian novelette about a retired soldier—*Captain Gazar*.

The psychological novelette by Grigor Zokhrab (1861—1915) *Tefarik* (the name of a pungent Eastern balm) is the story of a peasant girl who comes to town from a backwoods village. Encountering the first semblance of human sympathy in her life in the person of an aristocratic student she falls hopelessly in love with him. It is a tragic love, for the wealthy young man can by no means overcome the feeling of inequality between him and his servant.

Shirvanzade's story *Comrade* portrays a careerist and man of the world, a well-known lawyer who wants to break into "society" by marrying the daughter of an oil king. His friend, an engineer and a relative of his fiancée, discovering that he has illicit ties and an illegitimate child, tries to prevent the marriage. But the lawyer threatens to challenge his friend's cheque which he has in his possession and so induces him to keep quiet. To all outward appearances they remain true friends. The story is reminiscent of Maupassant.

*Saadi's Last Spring*, by Avetik Isaakian is a philosophical romantic story about the great poet of the Orient in his declining years. It ends with the words: "We are born willy-nilly, live in a maze and die regretfully."

The novelette *A Fairy Tale* by Derenik De-



Armenian writer, describes a day in the life of a peasant family. News comes of the heroic death of one of their members at the front during the Patriotic War. But on the same day two babies are born to the family. The collective farmers, the other villagers, come to condole with the family on their loss, but the mourning turns into a christening. It is the story of the triumph of life over death.

Armenian writers have felt the influence of both great literatures, classic Russian and French of the 19th century. The Armenian writers of the East came under the sway of the first, the Western Armenians under the influence of the second.

The influence of other literatures, however, does not prevent the Armenian writers from preserving their originality and national character.

## THE RECOLLECTIONS OF SOFIA KOVALEVSKAYA

Sofia Kovalevskaya. *Childhood Recollections*. Editor S. Shtraikh. Academy of Sciences Publishing House. Moscow. 225 pages.

Sofia Kovalevskaya, the famous Russian mathematician, had a brief, but eventful life. She could easily be the heroine of a novel.

She grew up on a wealthy estate (Kovalevskaya's father was a big landowner and a leading figure among the local nobility), skillful in pictures of relatives, servants and Miss Smith, the governess, an excellent close-up of Fyodor Dostoyevsky who took an active part in the Kovalevskaya sisters' first steps in literature, this is the main theme of S. Kovalevskaya's *Childhood Recollections*.

The eleven-year-old girl who used to be for hours over the lithographed copies of P. Petrogradsky's lectures on the differential and integral calculus, which she pinned up over her room, became a famous mathematician.

Sofia Kovalevskaya achieved world renown with her remarkable work on mathematics and mechanics at the Stockholm University, by winning the prize of the Paris Academy of Sciences for her researches into the problem of the movement of a solid body around a fixed point: *Sur le problème de la rotation d'un corps solide autour d'un point fixe*. And she made history by being the first woman elected a corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Science.

She also had no mean talent for letters. Six months before her death her *Childhood Recollections* were published in the magazine *Izvestia Evropy*. The book has now been reprinted by the Academy in amplified form.

As *Childhood Recollections* naturally go further than Sofia Kovalevskaya's girlhood and give nothing of her work in science, the new volume includes excerpts from autobiographical essays, letters, and diaries giving an idea of her later life.

## PERETS MARKISH IN RUSSIAN

Perets Markish. *Poems*. Translated from Hebrew into Russian. State Literary Publishing House. Moscow. 418 pages.

Markish is outstanding among contemporary Jewish poets and leading translators such as Antokolsky, Levik and Penkovsky took part in translating his works into Russian. When *The Borderline* (1933) came out, the first collection of his poems to appear in Russian, critics spoke of his great poetic culture, and profundity of thought.

Perets Markish is not only a poet, he is a writer of prose and plays besides. He has written *The Return of Neitan Bekker* (1933—1934), a novel, and the plays *Earth* and *Kol-Nidre*.

Markish gives a graphic picture of the limited world of the small old Jewish town and its people and contrasts it with flourishing Soviet culture.

In the collection under review verses written during the last war predominate. It has the following sections: *Invincible*, *Autumn 1941*, *In Spite of Death*, *The Last Line*, *Lyricalism*, *The Offensive*, and the two poems *Thistle*, and *The Ripening of the Fruit*. *Russia*, the opening poem of the collection, sings the praises of the country that led the struggle against fascism and speaks of the destiny of her people.

Most of the poems under the heading *Autumn 1941* describe the battle of Moscow. Among them are *The Legend of the 28*, about the 28 guardsmen of General Panfilov's division who fell in the battle of Moscow, and *Tanya*, a poem about Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya, the country's heroine. The collection also contains poems on the battles of Leningrad and Stalingrad.

A terrible hatred for the fascist butchers rings in the *Winter Ballad*, translated by P. Antokolsky, and *Sanbat*, translated by L. Rust.

The idea running through the romantic *Winter Ballad* is that the fascists are doomed, that they are living corpses, while the girl partisan whom they tortured, a symbol of the deathless liberty of the people, lives on, in spite of death.

*Sanbat* (Medical Corps) tells of the surgeon who proceeds with an operation on a wounded sailor during bombardment.

One of the most moving poems in the section *In Spite of Death* tells of the martyrdom of the Jews who found themselves under Nazi rule and of their will to live, kept going by the desire to hit back at German fascism. The section ends with the poem *The Jewish Fighting Man*.

A typical feature of Markish's works is his love of life, his acute perception of the outside world, hence his fondness of landscape and visual detail. Thoughts on the destiny of the Jewish people occupy a large place in his poems. *The Dancing Girl From the Ghetto* is an unusual cycle of lyrical and philosophical verse.

*Thistle* (1934—1935) and *The Ripening of the Fruit* (1939) were written in the years of peaceful construction. The chief character of the first is a man to whom the ethics of the new world are foreign. He is a superfluous weed... a thistle.

*The Ripening of the Fruit* tells of Jewish and Russian peasants who, by different routes, arrive at the conviction that collective farming is the best and most rational way of tilling the soil. For both, the idea finds its

personification in Stalin who understands "the noble heart of the soil."

The last section in the collection is *The Offensive* written during the Red Army's great forward sweep. It ends with a hymn to Red Square in Moscow, symbolizing the Soviet Union's triumph.

### SELECTED STORIES BY LESKOV

Nikolai Leskov. *Selected Works. State Literary Publishing House.* Moscow. 461 pages.

Nikolai Leskov was one of the leading Russian writers of the second half of the 19th century. The collection which contains 25 stories gives a fair representation of Leskov's work. Among them are *The Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* and *The Amazon* in which Leskov gives a striking picture of the life of the old merchant class. *The Serf Artist*, one of Leskov's pearls tells the tragic story of a serf artist and an actress at the mercy of a foolish but willful mistress.

*Left-Handed* and *The Darner* are stories of amazingly skillful Russian craftsmen. *Left-Handed* is an amusing and fantastic story of how a resourceful Tula gunsmith shoed a microscopic steel flea made by an Englishman.

Well represented are Leskov's stories about "truthseekers", who in the stifling atmosphere of tsarist Russia, stubbornly search for truth and justice. These are the heroes of *The Enchanted Palmer*, *The Cadet Monastery*, *Single-Minded* and *The Scarecrow*. The Quixotic truthseeker, generally a man of the people, occupies a prominent place in Leskov's works. With this are linked the ethical aims of the writer, especially marked in the eighties, when he made close contact with Leo Tolstoy.

The collection closes with Leskov's biting satirical stories and sketches (*Improvisors*, and others), in which he delivers a frontal attack on the seamy side of life in tsarist Russia.

The book has an introduction by Boris Drugov and an essay by the writer's son A. N. Leskov, giving important biographical material. It contains portraits of Leskov and also reproductions of the well-known illustrations to Leskov's stories by the artists Kustodiev and Dobuzhinsky.

### A BOOK ABOUT LESKOV

Valentina Gebel. *Leskov. In the Writer's Laboratory.* Soviet Writer Publishing House. Moscow. 221 pages.

The author of the book had access not only to published material but also to valuable manuscripts left by the writer including the autographs of a number of his works, his note-books and a number of hitherto unpublished letters. Taking the reader into Leskov's "laboratory", the author analyzes the writer's ideas, examines their source and studies the course of the creative process, following the outline of the work built up from the original notes, through the intermediate stages to the final editing.

Particularly interesting is the author's examination of Leskov's work on the choice of words. The writer was one of the most original masters of Russian prose and paid extraordinary attention to language. Leskov who drew upon the speech of ordinary people,

is master of both archaic and modern language. None was more indefatigable in collecting new expressions and colloquialisms. Skillfully playing with words, Leskov makes the speech of each of his numerous characters stand out from the rest as no other writer can. The author also pays tribute to Leskov's mastery as a story-teller and his art at building up his novels.

### STORIES OF COURAGE AND NOBILITY

Asker Yevtykh. *Return. Adigey National Publishing House.* Maikop.

Asker Yevtykh's original style and individual approach to his theme is just that which goes to the making of a true work of art. The two stories in this book deal with the courage and nobility of the Soviet people during the Patriotic War.

The background to both these stories about ordinary people is the aul (village) in Adigey. In the first an old man saves a Russian woman, the wife of his son. The second is about a proud and independent man who has grown up in loneliness and poverty. It tells of his love, of how his wife waits for him during the war, and the happiness their work and mutual love brings them.

Simple wisdom, native optimism and a gentle humour, inherent in oriental tales, pervade these two stories written in a leisurely Eastern style where each common phrase rings like an old adage.

### THE HISTORY OF A BATTLE

Georgi Berezko. *Division Commander.* Navy Publishing House. Moscow. 128 pages.

*Division Commander* by Georgi Berezko is a book which describes the birth of military experience and how the "offensive" spirit of the Soviet commanders grew out of grim defensive fighting.

The operation described in this narrative is a typical "rank and file" action of the days when the Red Army first began its offensive operations. Actually the battle scenes are not the most important in the book. The very composition of the story itself underlines not the descriptive parts, but the problems which arise.

The hero of the story is a young divisional commander, Colonel Bogdanov, one of those people whose will, courage and military skill secured the victory of the Soviet people.

Bogdanov's division has been thinned by days of continuous fighting, its flanks have been fettered by the enemy, depriving it of manoeuvrability. One battalion has been cut off and is fighting in encirclement. An attempt to storm a vital hill position fails. One of the regiments is forced to retreat with losses.

Confronted with these serious circumstances the commander must make a decision. His Chief-of-Staff, Lieutenant-Colonel Vesnin, suggests a sound and well-thought-out plan of operations in which all eventualities have apparently been taken into account.

But Bogdanov is not satisfied. Vesnin's plan will not lead to success. Intuition, such a necessary asset of the genuine commander, prompts Bogdanov to make a different deci-



n—one based on deep conviction of the moral fibre of his officers and men, a decision which thrusts aside all traditional tactics and which will result in victory.

This, in short, is the essence of the story. The actual descriptions of the fighting and the direct battle impressions are secondary—the main theme is the development of the strategic idea and conduct of the commander during the battle.

The rest of the characters, Chief-of-Staff Gennin, the unsuccessful battalion commander, Major Byelozub and Shura, the girl reconnaissance scout, are only sketched.

Chief interest in Berezko's *Division Commander* lies in the attempt to portray the type of Red Army commander which developed during the Patriotic War.

## THE DEFENSE OF A TOWN

Evgeni Ryss. *At the Town Gates*. Soviet Writers Publishing House. Moscow. 191 p. 25.

The scene of this story is laid in the town Starozavodsk which, as its name implies, grew up round a large factory of long standing. The main characters are the Fyedichevs, a family which has worked for generations in the factory.

The book covers the period 1939—1941. The story is told by the boy Lyosha, Fyedichev's youngest son, and consequently it covers the family life of a factory workman in peacetime and the events connected with the declaration of war; the first German air raids, food shortages and the fight for the town are seen through the eyes of a thirteen-year-old boy and described in the characteristic school-boy slang which makes the book very readable.

The book is divided into two parts—*Life in the Town of Starozavodsk* and *Fighting in the Town of Starozavodsk*.

The first part is mainly concerned with the family life of Fyedichev's family from the end of 1939 to the evacuation of the factory in the autumn of 1941. The tense emotion and concealed anguish felt by the family as the Germans approach their home town ring true to life.

Part two deals not only with the Fyedichev family, but all the citizens of Starozavodsk who refused to leave their home town; all those who, from great to small, stood firm in its defense. The author tries to show that in times of national danger people who are described under ordinary peacetime conditions, tower to heroic heights and sacrifice their lives in order to block the enemies' path. The men include Dyegtarenko, a factory engineer, the workman Nossov and others.

The book ends with a description of the Germans' retreat from the town and the solemn funeral of those who perished in its defense. Fyedichev, stricken with grief, but at the same time proud of the heroic death of his eldest and best loved son, throws a handful of earth into his grave and then pre-

sents the hero's rifle to his fourteen-year-old son that he may replace his elder brother in the ranks.

## THE LIFE OF AN OUTSTANDING NATURALIST

V. A. Dogel. *A. O. Kovalevsky*. Academy of Sciences Publishing House. Moscow-Leningrad. 154 pages.

One of the brightest stars in the brilliant constellation of Russian naturalists who began their scientific labours in the sixties of last century is Alexander Onufrievich Kovalevsky (1840—1901).

Unfortunately, although Alexander Kovalevsky is acknowledged and esteemed among specialists, he is not so well known to the general public. Not much has been written about him and what is available is too difficult for the laymen. For this reason the new book about the naturalist by V. A. Dogel, Corresponding Member of the Academy of Sciences of the U. S. S. R., is all the more valuable.

The author deals chiefly with Kovalevsky's work; his outside life interests him only insofar as it affects his scientific activities.

The life of Kovalevsky differed greatly from those of many important scientists of the past. What a contrast it was to that of his brilliant and unhappy brother Vladimir Kovalevsky, a paleontologist whose researches caused a revolution in science and whose life was one long chain of misfortunes ending in suicide when he was but forty-six!

"One has a profound feeling of satisfaction," writes Dogel, "when able to say that Alexander Kovalevsky's pure, self-sacrificing life ended in a number of quiet years mellowed by universal respect, a comfortable income and a happy family circle."

Besides being a member of the Russian Academy Kovalevsky was also a member of eight foreign academies, and even the Turkish Sultan decorated him with the Order of Mejidie.

The pages of Dogel's book dealing with Kovalevsky's character as a scientist are extremely interesting. They show his caution and complete objectivity with regard to facts.

The confirmation of the Darwin theory of the unity of origin of the entire animal world on the basis of embryological material is Kovalevsky's main service and grants him the right to be remembered for all time.

Thanks to the works of Kovalevsky and Mechnikov, Russian zoological science caught up with that of other countries. We may go even further and call the period 1865—1890 the Russian era in the development of embryology, for besides Kovalevsky and Mechnikov on the "embryological horizon" at that time there were other stars of lesser magnitude, but also Russians: Ganin, Zelensky, Bobretsky and Wagner (who discovered pedogenesis).

V. A. Dogel's book is a valuable contribution to the history of the natural sciences in Russia.

## NEW SOVIET FILM *THE GREAT TURNING-POINT* AS DESCRIBED BY ITS AUTHOR AND DIRECTOR



*Boris Chirskov, the author of the script*

The idea of a film about a Soviet general arose in February, 1942.

The Germans had suffered defeat at Moscow in a battle which startled the world as the first "miracle" of the war. To those of us, who lived through the grim months of the retreat when the avalanche of steel was sweeping relentlessly onwards, threatening to overwhelm all that was dear to us, this was no miracle but a remarkable exploit born of brave and wise human will-power that said, "Halt!" to death.

The idea of the "military leader" developed out of the need to understand this exploit. In those days every Soviet artist was consumed with the desire to portray war episodes and in this way contribute to the common struggle.

The theme was urgent and topical. None of us dreamed that it would remain with us throughout the years of the war and that we would put into it all we had experienced and pondered over during those trying times.

What did we know of modern warfare? The bitter experience of air raids and evacuation... Newspapers, terse military communiqués, books. Months passed in fruitless efforts to "build up" the image of a Soviet general on the basis of historical figures and the military traditions of the Russian people, whereas life itself was moulding and tempering this character in the unprecedented trials of our own day.

A fresh wave of the German offensive pierced the front and penetrated to the very heart of the country, sweeping south into the Caucasus and creeping east towards Stalingrad. The summer campaign of 1942 upset more than one expert concept of war and the military art, to say nothing of our feeble attempts!

Gradually we became reconciled to the idea that we had undertaken the impossible and busied ourselves with other work. Then, the great finale of the battle of Stalingrad electrified the world. Stalingrad was the answer to all the questions that had troubled us. It solved the problem of our search for a theme.

This was another "miracle", but a "miracle" that revealed the triumph of purposeful and organized human will-power, strong enough to turn the wheel of history.

You will recall how the daily drama of the unequal battle waged amid the ruins of the burning city was unfolded before our eyes; how from month to month the tragedy of its heroic but seemingly hopeless defense deepened. And suddenly, at the peak of the German offensive, when literally only a few yards of the Volga banks lay between the Germans and victory, the invaders' chariot crashed.

In the space of a few days, the Soviet armies which had sealed the ring around the Germans traced such clear-cut lines of attack on top of the chaos of the months' old battle, that even the layman, glancing at the map, could grasp the general outlines of a lucid and well-laid plan.

Stalingrad represented not only the triumph of staunchness, endurance and iron courage. It was primarily a victory of human thought and will-power over what seemed the fatal powers of unfavourable circumstances, over an enemy vastly superior in men and machines, over the most exact calculations of the German generals who claimed a precision second to none in the world.

Against the background of these events we saw, in clear outline, the figures of the men who had controlled the events. In the course of the war there came to the forefront a galaxy of able and skillful generals—the prototypes of the heroes of our film.

We realized, of course, that we could not hope to tell the story of this titanic historical drama through the traditional medium of personal relations, even though these be coloured by the military profession of the hero. The military work, skill, the human and professional aspects of the nature of the "general" had to form the essence of the theme. Only an outstanding military leader and a major military operation could depict our general as we imagined him. On the other



and, it was clear that such an operation could not be invented. The people who had lived the daily-drama of war in all its details could scorn an imaginary episode. Only by merging into this living experience of the war, by awakening recollections of a truly epic event could we interest and grip our audience.

Stalingrad supplied the event, but it was too early to produce an historically exact film about Stalingrad; insuperable difficulties confronted the artist the moment he decided to give historical names to his characters.

The distinguishing feature of *The Great Turning-Point* is that it tells the story of Stalingrad without being an historical chronicle. The city is not mentioned once. While we adhered to historical truth and accuracy of military and political events we gave free rein to our imagination in dealing with the details of the plot and with the characters.

Time proved that we acted correctly.

As the great battle receded into the past of time, it became clearer that Stalingrad was not only the turning-point

of the war but that it contained within itself, as it were, the formula of the great battles that followed—the formula of the Stalin strategy. This enabled us to introduce into our film certain events and facts concerned with another of the decisive operations of this war, the battle of the Kursk bulge.

Against the background of one battle we attempted a generalization of the war as a whole.

Another feature of *The Great Turning-Point* is that although it is a film about war, it is not a battle film. In its days Napoleon, Wellington or Suvorov directed battles and sometimes even participated in them; nowadays battles sometimes last months and involve hundreds of miles of territory. The enthusiasm of the modern general finds expression in the psychologically difficult and strenuous work of mind and will, in the intricate details of organization concentrated in a quiet office at headquarters miles behind the lines.

As for the battle events related in the story, we have attempted to convey them through the medium of scenes in the reception room of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief in the Kremlin, in the field headquarters, the field command post, etc.

In the following outline of the film we cannot convey a complete picture, for the essence of the story is contained in the details of dialogue and psychological interpretation; we will, however, give the reader an idea of the difficulties which we had to overcome in dramatizing our concept.

Moscow. The anteroom of the Supreme Commander in the Kremlin. The conversation among the generals awaiting audience acquaints the spectators with the critical situation on a vital sector of the front. A German break-through is threatening a city on the fate of which the entire Soviet front depends and perhaps even more—the fall of this city may serve as the signal for attack by new enemies in the Far and Near East. A change of commanders is announced. Colonel-General Muravyev comes out of Stalin's room: he has been appointed commander of this difficult front, he carries with him the decision of the council.



*Friedrich Ermler, the director of the film*

At field headquarters a heated argument takes place between the former commander General Vinogradov and General Krivenko, commanding the 21st Army. Krivenko, quick-tempered and ambitious, is convinced that the last opportunity of delivering a decisive counterblow which would save the city has been lost. "Tomorrow it will be too late." General Vinogradov refuses to let Krivenko have reserves, saying he has had no orders to that effect from the High Command, and informs him that the new commander of the front—Muravyev—is due to arrive. The news delights Krivenko—Muravyev is an old friend.

From the aerodrome, Muravyev drives straight to the area of the break-through. Then comes a short, grim conversation with taciturn, battle-scarred Lieutenant Fyodorov, who with three of his men has broken out of enemy encirclement. One of the Lieutenant's men, Stepan, is a prosaic and imperturbable soldier, a genuine representative of the spirit and wisdom that lives on in the people.

En route to the front a fleeting meeting takes place between Muravyev and his wife, who is an army doctor. This is the sole appearance of a woman in the film. Only for a second are we given a glimpse of the intimate family life of the hero.

On the outskirts of the city, where the last line of fortifications is being feverishly erected, Muravyev encounters General Panteleyev of the Engineers, a traditional Russian character, important in the film. Panteleyev is an oldish man with a non-military bearing. Somewhat stout, a modest practical soldier possessing faultless intuition, and a warm and staunch heart.

Mention must be made of Muravyev's inseparable companion—his chauffeur "Mi-

nutka", a gay, self-confident fellow who looks after his commander as a nurse would look after a child.

The increasing seriousness of the situation is finally made clear at field headquarters in the course of a long conversation between Muravyev and the retiring commander Vinogradov. To Vinogradov's anxious question, "What is the decision of the Supreme Commander," Muravyev makes no reply.

A capable and experienced staff officer, Vinogradov, bending over the map, gives a pitiless analysis of the almost insurmountable difficulties of the position. (This is a true description of the situation at Stalin-grad. The dialogue is typical of many in the film and would become tiresome if the audience were not carried away by the reality of the complicated and difficult job facing these men and by the psychological strain of the struggle.) Throughout, Muravyev's replies are curt and laconic: "That means we have to gain time, in the first place." "Secondly, and this is most important, under no circumstances draw upon the strategic reserves." "Well, let us draw another conclusion: defeat is not enough, the enemy must be utterly routed, routed beyond hope of early recovery." Compared to Vinogradov's logical and exact objections, Muravyev's words sound strangely unreal, the decisions and actions of the new commander seem to lack conviction. He even seems to give in to Vinogradov's last argument, and interrupting the conversation, submits an unexpected proposal to Vinogradov: to remain with him as his Chief of Staff. To Vinogradov, who has been the commander of the front and, in the past, Muravyev's teacher, this is a difficult and painful decision, but he agrees.

Like the first roll of thunder, heralding the bursting of the storm, explosions announce an air raid on the city and immediately afterwards a telephone call from 7th Army headquarters announces the beginning of a big enemy action. The Germans are attacking Mikhailovka, one of the decisive sectors of the front. At the same time in Mikhailovka itself a German staff major, carrying an important operational map is taken prisoner. (An actual fact which occurred near Stalin-grad.)

The prisoner is brought to Muravyev. Again we see our friend Stepan as the escort. The German's story and an examination of the map explain the strange circumstances under which the capture was made. The German major drove into Mikhailovka, which was still being held by the Russians, since his map stated that the village was to be taken on that day "the 19th" and he, therefore, fulfilled orders with German punctuality. Similar arrows are found on the map against other names, thus disclosing the plans of the German command. Perhaps they had been discovered too late—the Germans were counting on a quick success which would leave Muravyev no time to undertake countermeasures. Muravyev makes a sarcastic analysis of this mechanically faultless strategy, but towards the end of the conversation it would almost seem that it is the prisoner who is the victor. A report comes in to the effect that the Germans entered Mikhailovka at 2 a. m. Neverthe-

less they were two hours behind schedule. The main thing now is to keep on winning time, to win an hour, a day, a week! Despite the danger of encirclement threatening the 7th Army, Muravyev orders it to hold each position to the last, and sets out for General Krivenko at headquarters of the 21st Army.

In the atmosphere of a joyous reunion of old friends, Krivenko tells Muravyev of his plan for a counterblow. He is confident of the latter's support. Muravyev agrees and fixes zero hour for this offensive. Krivenko is nonplussed. How will the reserves get up in time? Then it appears that there will be no reserves, that the plan which Krivenko has submitted in the passionate conviction that his blow will save the city, is designed to help the 7th Army, to save the situation. Only the confidence which he reposes in his older friend helps Krivenko restrain his indignation and painful surprise. Muravyev reminds him that he has come "not to promise but to demand."

From his field command post, Krivenko directs this, for him, tragic battle. He has already drawn upon himself three German divisions, but the enemy is throwing in more and more reinforcements. Muravyev refuses to let Krivenko have any additional forces, even when the action reaches the inevitable crisis. He is called to the telephone by General Vinogradov who reports a serious deterioration. The Germans have succeeded in piercing the lines of the 7th Army, more than 100 panzers are bearing down upon the city, there is nothing in their way. In the course of the telephone conversation, the wire breaks. The break is located but the Germans keep it under mortar fire to prevent anyone from approaching it. "Minutka", unable to bear the anxiety of his general, goes out to repair the line and dies, holding in his teeth the ends of the wire over which Muravyev's voice is heard organizing the defense of the city. Leaving front headquarters, Muravyev gives General Krivenko another difficult task—to ease the situation by delivering a blow against the flanks of the enemy.

At headquarters, a succession of heavy blows rains down on Muravyev. He is informed of the death of his wife. Upon hearing a report by the commander of a division that has made its way out of the encirclement, and where his wife served as a surgeon, Muravyev finds the strength to order him immediately to go to the assistance of the city. Almost at the same time he is informed that the communications with the city have been broken, and that reports are current that the Germans have already penetrated to the streets.

For a moment it seems that even Muravyev's iron will is broken. He is on the verge of calling upon the strategic reserves. He summons the commanders of the reserve divisions, but orders to "verify that report once more."

During the night, the generals summoned to the council grimly listen to a German broadcast. And as though in reply to Muravyev, comes a hysterical German speech, announcing the fall of the city, the exultant roar of the crowd and the thunder of massed bands. This is unbearable. Somebody switches off the radio. In the ensuing silence, the com-





*Still from the film THE GREAT TURNING-POINT. General Muravyev (artist Derzhavin)*

Commander is called to the wire by the Supreme Command. "I'll be removed, I think... Yes, I can imagine what the Commander-in-Chief will say...."

The ribbon unexpectedly brings Muravyev warm words of sympathy on the loss of his life... A pang of sorrow which brings relief... But the words run on in the demand: General Muravyev, report on the situation in the city and on the fulfillment of the plan to the council."

There is animation among the generals, the news from the city was not at all discouraging. The resistance put up by the workers' battalions had stopped the German advance until the division sent by Muravyev, came up. Krivenko's repeated attacks had drawn off the German forces and by a daring manoeuvre his men had broken through to the city and had sealed the gap although fighting was actually in progress on the streets.

Muravyev, imperturbably calm as always, turns to the generals and opens the council which is to decide the fate of the city. The expression of the sharply-conflicting points of view is restrained by the presence of the commander. Both Vinogradov and Krivenko argue that events have justified their assumptions. The careful Vinogradov considers the possibility of a catastrophe and suggests a number of measures in case the city is lost. Krivenko, the hero of the day, again insists on decisive offensive with the use of all the strategic reserves. Questioned by Muravyev, the modest Panteleyev unexpectedly points out a number of advantages derived from the fact that the battle has been carried into the city and the latter itself wrecked. He is for the defense of the city to the last man. If necessary, it can be done."

Muravyev suddenly summons Lieutenant

Fyodorov to the council: he has come to the headquarters to receive a decoration. Muravyev addressing this representative of the lower ranks, says: "Comrade Stalin said to me today: 'Hold the city by any and every means.' How shall we answer him?" "We will not leave it. There is no room for us on the other side of the river." In a sense this is a demonstration for the benefit of the generals. Muravyev cancels the measures suggested by Vinogradov in the event of the fall of the city, and entrusts the defense of the city to the 21st Army. Krivenko, commander of the 21st, nervously remarks that if things remain as before he cannot guarantee the fate of the city. Muravyev immediately relieves him of his command which is given to General Panteleyev.

After the council, Muravyev catches up with Krivenko and speaks to him in a friendly way. Krivenko, however, is irreconcilable, he requests leave of absence to have a wound dressed, which he received while commanding the 21st Army. In the end, however, Krivenko refuses the dressing and for the last time drives at top speed to his army, thirty kilometres away. Behind him comes Panteleyev to take over the command of the army.

In an earnest conversation between Muravyev and Vinogradov, the latter fully reveals his position. "The absence of the second front has created this situation and only the second front can change it. A retreat beyond the river would enable us to wait and then take the city and advance." "After the allies?" demands Muravyev. "Yes," Vinogradov correctly estimates the military and international situation. In his way Krivenko is also right. "But," says Muravyev, "a real general makes his own plan and creates the conditions he requires."

At this point, Muravyev informs Vinogradov of the general plan of the offensive worked out by the Supreme Command.

At the headquarters of the 21st Army, Krivenko, weakened by loss of blood, collapses. He is caught in the arms of old Panteleyev. "Don't dare give up the city," exclaims Krivenko in delirium. "I'll hold it, I'll hold it, old man!"

For the first time in the film we see short battle scenes amid the ruins of the city, which give us an inkling of the test which has to be undergone. Amid the fire and thunder we see the familiar figures of Lieutenant Fyodorov and the soldier Stepan, defending house No. 48. From the depths of a deep cellar, beneath a pile of ruins, Panteleyev calmly commands this terrible field.

Suddenly the screen brings a contrast: a dense forest filled with tanks, artillery—the untouched fresh units. Muravyev, in high spirits, is inspecting the reserves, which have been secretly concentrating in the woods and gullies. Here he receives a despatch announcing a crisis in the city. The Germans have broken through to the river and cut the defenses in two. They are throwing in fresh divisions brought from France, their tanks are still wearing the yellow camouflage of the African desert. A sharp conflict takes place in Muravyev's mind. Before him crawl endless lines of powerful tanks. "If I could only throw all this into the city, things would become easier immediately." But not only the fate of the city is being decided here. The entire course of the war, the length of the war—all this is being decided here. . . .

Another month passes. Krivenko, fit and well again, comes to Muravyev. A sincere and difficult reconciliation takes place. And now Muravyev leads his friend into his study and, bending over the map, for the first time reveals to him and to the officers present the plan of the Supreme Command.

Again the commanders of the armies meet in council. Krivenko is given command of one of the new formations. To the accompaniment of a general sigh of relief, Muravyev formally announces the date for the offensive. The plan of this offensive is based on the calculation that in the weeks still remaining before winter sets in, the German attacks will grow in violence and von Klaus will go all out in a decisive attempt to take the city.

But the unexpected happens. The Germans call off their attacks and a lull sets in right along the front. In the ruins of house No. 48 Muravyev anxiously listens to the terrible silence of the dead city. Here one more significant meeting takes place with the Lieutenant and the soldier Stepan. In Panteleyev's cellar Muravyev tries to fathom what the silence means. "Have they learned of our offensive, are they drawing off?" The arrival of General Vinogradov and the chief intelligence officer brings the solution. A council is in progress at the headquarters of the German commander von Klaus, with Hitler himself in attendance. This is undoubtedly a lull before the decisive, all-out attack on the city. Despite the difficulty of this decision General Panteleyev suggests

that the offensive be delayed and the German attack parried in order to cripple the main enemy forces in the city. The blow will undoubtedly be stronger than was formerly thought, the city should be reinforced by several divisions, but this would mean weakening the strength of the imminent Soviet offensive. Finally, a risky decision is made—two hours before the German assault, where Klaus can no longer cancel it, the entire supply of shells intended for a protracted defense is to be rained on the Germans, and the strength of the blow will thus be weakened. The risk here is that the zero hour of the German offensive must be definitely established.

The news of the impending German attack comes at night, two hours before the assault is due to begin. Muravyev has no time left in which to communicate with the Supreme Command and to verify this report thoroughly. He has to decide himself—success or failure is his responsibility. He takes the risk and gives the order to open fire. This moment in which the fate of the entire operation hangs in the balance, the agonizing wait for the German softening up barrage, the seemingly endless ten minutes by which the hesitating enemy is late, form the culminating point of the film.

The risk is brilliantly justified. The Germans, hurried already before the opening of the assault, throw themselves savagely against the city. A few more difficult moments torture Muravyev. The Germans have unexpectedly thrown in a number of fresh divisions. At the same time the news is brought that General Panteleyev has been mortally wounded. Muravyev drives at top speed into the city to comfort a gallant comrade. The old soldier dies as simply as he lived. He explains with great difficulty to Muravyev that the Germans withdrew their fresh divisions from their flanks, against which the weight of our offensive is to be aimed. "Now is the time." "Yes, now is the time," decides Muravyev. The scenes which follow depict the crushing blow which has been so long and carefully prepared. The Germans are battered and surrounded. The redoubtable Lieutenant Fyodorov and his inevitable companion Stepan penetrate into the cellar of the German headquarters. Fyodorov curthly demands that general von Klaus, who has surrendered, come out to him.

When von Klaus is brought to front headquarters, Muravyev is dozing over a newspaper. He frowns, and tells the Chief Intelligence Officer: "Look after him yourself. I am more interested in Mannstein now."

Generals Krivenko and Vinogradov appear. They have commanded armies which closed in from different sides and sealed the ring around Klaus' army. Muravyev congratulates them: "The great turning-point has come. This morning, the enemy front has been breached on the southern and central directions. . . We are only a part of the great offensive of the entire Soviet front. Forward to the West, on to Berlin!"

This is the general outline of the story of the film. Perhaps it somewhat resembles the conspectus of a military review. How did we fill in this outline, wherein does it



differ from the film itself which has some claim to a place in art?

We must make an unexpected admission here.

In the film there are of course more military details. The dialogues deal in still greater detail with the complicated skein of military-strategic problems and situations. Questions of the German and Russian styles of strategy, the international situation, the matter of the second front, all the questions which figured in the daily press during the war, appear in the film not merely as a description of the times but as the basic elements of the theme.

We had access to the military records, to the documents dealing with the Stalingrad operation, and the documents revealed to us a vivid and dramatic situation, which absorbed our interest to the exclusion of all else. The strategic background of the scenario took form in our minds' eye, leaving very little to be added.

We were then faced with the difficulty of presenting this mass of facts and circumstances in a way that they would hold the audience. Of course, we knew that people who lived through the war would like to take a peep into military headquarters where the operation was planned, into the world which was hidden from them by the profound secrecy, imposed by wartime. But where were we to register the sensations, passions, conflict of interests, all those human factors without which art is unthinkable?

How could we portray the drama of personal human passions through the medium of the professional conversations of generals? How could we express the invisible mental strain

of the general bending over a dry map? Where was the struggle in which the fate of heroes was decided? The vision of the map, as a symbol of boredom, dogged us to the very end of our work on this film. To get away from it, we had to resort to past experience, to the tried secrets of traditional dramaturgy. We sought personal conflict—but there were none, or they were so insignificant that they had no place in the historical drama in which our characters were involved. The idea of depicting the struggle through the consecutive medium of the Soviet and the German sides was immediately rejected—there were plenty of puppets representing German officers and soldiers to be seen in other films.

There was of course the inevitable desire to include romantic incidents by introducing women into the story, but women could not find their way into headquarters where the main conflict was staged. Then we conceived the idea of a secondary plot to centre around the defense of House No. 48, where Lieutenant Fyodorov, the soldier Stepan and others were fighting. In this atmosphere of battle, suffering, and death, of the simple relations between ordinary people, it was much easier to build up such a theme, and we planned that the drama of these scenes would make up for the dryness of the headquarters scenes. For instance, we centred considerable hopes around a girl, who, with other townspeople, had taken refuge in the cellar of house No. 48. Amid the fire and blood of the battle she cherished a secret love for the lieutenant. During a lull, she put on her best dress and shoes and went to meet him. The shoes were too tight. In the



Still from the film *THE GREAT TURNING-POINT*. General Muravyev greets Lieutenant Fyodorov

end the girl was killed and, dying she begged the people around her to remove her tight shoes.

But we had decided to make a film about generals. In our innermost thoughts we sighed for the additional excitement, occasional presence of a spy. It would not, however, be interesting to relate all the flights of our imagination in the course of hammering out the first rough draft of the scenario. It would have been like the usual Hollywood film with the heroes in generals' uniforms.

Then we left for the front in order to check up on our work. Events did not wait for us, the front was already near Kiev. And here all our previous plans went by the board. Here we saw nothing even remotely resembling our civilian ideas. We found neither the traditional conflicts, nor imposing pictures, we found instead, the prosaic and empty spaces of modern warfare. Like a heavy tank, the front shattered our imaginary scheme of people and things. We were depressed, it seemed that the job was really impossible. And we shall never forget how later, in conversation with General Vatutin, who subsequently was killed, in meetings with numerous officers and soldiers, these men at the front taught us the truth about front-line life and struggle. Chiefly we carried away with us a new feeling: that a powerful drama, undreamed of by scenario writers, lay hidden behind the restrained silence of the general's headquarters in the peasant cottage near Kiev, around his command post during the hours of battle, in the dugout of General (now Marshal) Rybalko, in the dark gully in which the tanks of his army lay concealed before the assault, and behind the dull landscape of front-line roads and crossings. We left the battle area with our thoughts and feelings in a whirl, we had found no ready answers to our dramaturgical doubts, but all that we had seen was there before us, night and day, and demanded expression.

This experience was the highlight of our work on the scenario. Now we no longer approached our material from the viewpoint of the "laws of dramaturgy" but with a sense of the material itself, with an urgent feeling of the necessity of moulding and chiselling this material, by any means in our power, even if this meant breaking the fragile instruments of tradition. We record with gratitude the numerous people (officers, soldiers, war correspondents, newsreel men) who helped our work by pooling the grains of their experience. Moreover, they helped us find the true drama of the plot. A simple remark made by an officer to the effect that the plan of the Supreme Commander could scarcely be known to all the generals right at the beginning of the film suddenly showed us that in this delayed development of the motif of the "confidential plan" lay one of the salient features of the theme.

The really surprising thing was that front-line life revealed to us the secret of the genre of our film. At the front we came to understand that we were not planning a battle film but a psychological one. And as soon as we realized this we were gradually freed

from the hampering influence of the material itself.

Front-line observations and emotions, close contact with army commanders helped us to understand how behind the strategy lay hidden the psychology of the men who made this strategy. This enabled us to approach our strategic theme as a character film. The exact and dry details of military strategy were to become the object of psychological emotions, and in their turn explained through human psychology.

Now we began to work with a will on the dull staff scenes. The additional theme of the defense of house No. 48, that had taken on large dimensions, had to be dropped almost entirely. And here we made another important discovery: the figures of Lieutenant Fyodorov and the soldier Stepan, stripped of numerous melodramatic details and appearing only three or four times in the film, not only did not lose but perhaps even gained in expressiveness. It appeared that the same psychological efforts of will-power in connection with the seemingly abstract tasks of the struggle, which served to reveal the characters of the staff generals, also helped to develop the figures of the soldiers and junior officers. On the other hand, the ordinary human details, the concrete feelings and behaviour which were so easy to portray when dealing with these ordinary people, also proved necessary when dealing with the generals.

During our observations of front-line life and later in the development of our theme, we came to appreciate the law of the great concentration of many million human wills on one single aim, the law of the moral and psychological unity of an army when the barriers between the last soldier and the highest general disappear.

We collected a complete gallery of the most variegated men in the army, but under the tragic limelight of the great historical trial these are only separate facets in one unified national character. Here, it seems to us, we found the source of the "miracle" of the victory. We have already said that the events at Stalingrad clearly displayed the triumph of the plans, organization and skill of the generals, yet behind this there still lay the inaccessible secret of the endurance, persistence and inexhaustible power which threw overboard all former concepts of the limits of human possibilities. Yes, the men of Stalingrad, our friends of yesterday, were different people; ordinary conceptions no longer sufficed to describe the living character of our contemporaries. Having drained the bitter cup of war to the dregs, we understood that in the unprecedented sufferings and sacrifices of the mortal struggle, not only did the tried features of the Soviet Russian character manifest themselves, but a new character was born and tempered. This new character was able to achieve the miracle of victory and this is the most redoubtable "secret weapon" of our people.

Thus we reached a conclusion to our thoughts and work, and this is what we wish to convey through the film *The Great Turning-Point*. It is doubtful whether we have fully succeeded in this and we have also





...ll from the film *THE GREAT TURNING-POINT*. General Muravyev at the direct line

olated another art tradition: we have taken too soon of the past. In five, ten, perhaps 100 years' time all this will be told much better, nevertheless we have no regrets about what we have done. We had the opportunity of seeing our heroes in action, they themselves furnished our material. The scenes were shot on the Leningrad sector of the front, amid the smoking ruins of battle, without the aid of pyrotechnics. Real explosions threw huge buildings sky-high, the living men of the front, and the true details of front-line life portrayed in the film infused it with the grim breath of truth, even if we have not succeeded in the rest. The artist of the future will not have these opportunities. It was the purpose of this article to relate the rather unusual history of a work which is half created by its heroes. We merely followed events as they unfolded before us day to day, like a living drama in which we were actors and contemporaries. It was only necessary to transfer the emotions of these events to the film and to awaken the same emotions in the memories of the audience. Finally, neither a historical nor formal

interest but the keen anxiety of our contemporaries induced us to place this film before the public. In conclusion we wish once more to emphasize the thought which acted as the wind, filling the sails of our work. In world art, particularly in the art following the war of 1914—18, there appeared a tragic conception of war as a monstrous and senseless debauch of the elements of ruin and destruction, wrecking human fates and hopelessly crushing man. All the bitterness of the losses, of which a considerably greater share fell to our lot than to that of other nations, cannot extinguish the high hopes with which we have emerged from the trial of this war. We were the witnesses of a miracle. The formula of the classic tragedy—the single combat of man against fate, history against human strivings—found its solution in the triumph of man.

We know that the united will of the multitude directed towards one common goal can surmount obstacles which appear insurmountable. It is with this hope that we look to the post-war world.

BORIS CHIRSKOV  
FRIEDRICH ERMILER

#### SOME OPINIONS OF THE FILM

**KOLAI OKHLOPKOV**—theatre producer. Ermiler is not only a brilliant director capable of handling general compositions and mass epic scenes, but also a clever director-teacher who works carefully with his actors. Derzhavin is magnificent as Muravyev.

The actor shows us a man of iron will-power and great depths of soul.

The significance of the film *The Great Turning-Point* is enormous. It speaks not only of the front. Business executives, scientists, inventors, workers, collective farmers who see this film will again be inspired by



that will to victory which permeates the picture. In this lies the poetic value of the film.

**DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH**—composer.

In this picture the skill of the director's composition, the music, the work of the actors who created historic images of our military leaders, all made an unusually strong impression on me. I warmly congratulate the entire company on its excellent work.

The picture aims at highly complicated tasks. But director Friedrich Ermler, the author of the script Boris Chirskov, and the entire cast have coped with these tasks excellently. The film grips from beginning to end. Not for a long time have I seen such talent and skill.

**SERGEI GERASSIMOV**—film-director.

The script of *The Great Turning-Point* is a genuine literary work, the cut sheets of this film may be placed on a book-shelf because the art of the scenario is on a level with fiction. Chirskov is a real writer and his work an example of how a man of letters should work in the cinema: diligently and persistently.

**Major-General NIKOLAI TALENSKY.**

Through the medium of the realistic figures of Red Army generals, officers and soldiers, the authors have unfolded the theme of the superiority of Soviet strategy and the invincibility of the Soviet people led by Generalissimo Stalin. This subject, which acts as the leit-motif of the dramaturgical concept, runs convincingly and stirringly through the whole of the film.

The picture clearly shows how Stalin's brilliant military plans were executed by the talented generals schooled by him. Friedrich Ermler's monumental work relates in vivid and inspiring fashion how the turning

point was reached in the struggle against the German invaders who had violated the honor and independence of the Soviet land.

**IVAN PYRYEV**—film-director.

Ermler is an artist with high principles. From *The Shoemaker of Paris*, *Meeting*, and *The Great Citizen* he came to *The Great Turning-Point*. In this film he has given an excellent portrayal of the heroes of the Great Patriotic War, the generals, officers and men of the Stalin army of the Soviet Union. The scenario is the result of great, persistent and truly creative work. Chirskov worked on his scenario for two and a half years, carefully studying all the materials. And his success is richly deserved.

**MIKHAIL CHIAURELI**—film-director.

The film is of great emotional force. The stirring days of the epic battle at Stalingrad again return to us and again we relive the events of the recent past.

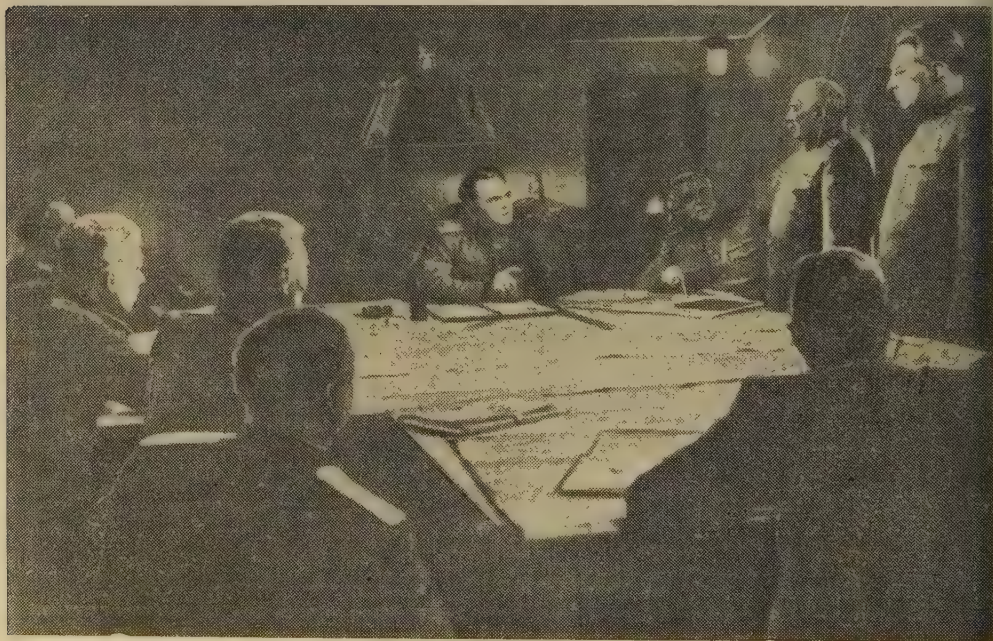
The picture recalls all that we have gone through, we are again outraged and indignant as we watch the shots of the enemy and the destruction caused by him, again and again we are filled with pride and admiration for our glorious army and its great leader.

**MARK DONSKOY**—film-director.

The epic of the Stalingrad, the decisive battle in the recent war, is portrayed so clearly and vividly in *The Great Turning-Point* that the spectator once more experiences to the full the grandeur of the historical events.

Stalingrad could only be presented on the screen by a man of outstanding talent, inspired vision and maximum professional skill. All these qualities are happily blended in the person of the director, Friedrich Ermler.

Ermler not only wished to portray great historical events—he aimed at revealing the full depth of the characters of his heroes.



Still from the film *THE GREAT TURNING-POINT*. The Military Council





*Still from the film THE GREAT TURNING-POINT. Soldiers at a machine-gun*

At the same time the producer was hampered by the rigid atmosphere of army life. Unnecessary words are not used, there are definite accepted traditions and manners of speech. In such circumstances it is difficult to catch the nuances of intonation and mood. The producer has no right to take any liberties in this matter. The stage on which the events unfold are the severe and modestly furnished rooms at staff headquarters and in dugouts.

And yet the director has succeeded in revealing the characters of his heroes, and their different reactions to the current events. The men in the film are warm and human. Ermler is one of those directors who devote primary attention to their actors. He was always interested in the actor, the human soul was always the most important feature in all his productions.

Ermler loves his characters, he understands them and is able to unfold them before us. Ermler is a producer who handles vast themes but he finds something big even in minute everyday details.

The producer had to deal with long dialogues and therefore the mise-en-scene demanded unusual resourcefulness. He succeeded brilliantly in overcoming all difficulties. The camera is in constant movement, it not only follows the speaking heroes (a method first introduced by Ermler but now common in our films), its movement is much more complicated. Let me explain by an example.

Lieutenant-General Krivenko, commander of the 21st Army, has just been relieved of his command. Muravyev, commander of the front, to whom Krivenko is not only a subordinate but an old friend, sits down on the couch. Then comes a rather long shot, built up by the director in masterly fashion, with

the utmost utilization of panorama. Muravyev is seated. He leans backwards wearily and shades his eyes with his hand. There is a discussion with his Chief-of-Staff Vinogradov whether to abandon the city and retreat beyond the river. Muravyev sums up the situation: "Many of us consider in our heart of hearts, that we cannot hold out on this side of the river. But one man has decided that it can and must be done. Any capable general can give a correct appraisal of the situation, utilize it, and plan accordingly. But only a genuine leader makes the plan and then, himself, creates the necessary situation. And we have one such leader and general!" These words are stressed in a close-up. Then Muravyev rises. The camera moves but it does not follow the chief character—Muravyev; unexpectedly we get a close-up of his Chief-of-Staff Vinogradov, while Muravyev recedes into the background. We watch Vinogradov pondering over the full meaning of Muravyev's words. And the onlooker does the same. The director does not allow us to forget this important dialogue the moment it is finished. With great finesse, he emphasizes Muravyev's words. Only after a long pause, Vinogradov replies: "Undoubtedly."

Meanwhile Muravyev is still in the background. Vinogradov is now nearest to the camera, he is beginning to understand that behind Muravyev's words lies a grand military plan which is still a secret to him, Vinogradov. And the expression on his face, showing this understanding, prepares us for Muravyev's next words.

Muravyev emerges from the background again: "What I am going to tell you is highly confidential! Only you will know and a few more men whom I shall choose to work with

you. I am speaking of the general plan of the Supreme Commander."

This scene is over 80 m. long. The camera moves easily and freely and it seems that it does not follow the physical movements of the actors, but the movement of their thoughts, stressing the most important moments in these thoughts. This is only possible through the art of the movie-camera, and Ermier possesses this art to a fine degree.

Many similar scenes could be cited. However, the director does not only elaborate his scenes to the full, he makes superb use of seemingly trifling details—for instance,

the ticking of the clock while waiting for the German attack to begin, the clatter of the ink-pot lid which falls with the first gun-salvo—all this speaks volumes. . . .

The battle scenes are amazingly realistic. They are laconic and accurate, they are artistic and true-to-life.

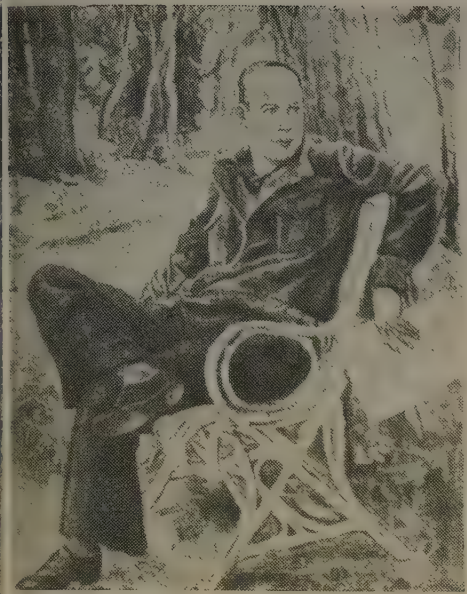
The truth of life, the truth of human actions, the truth of the least details that go to make up life—these are the chief qualities of this film. It is these qualities that make *The Great Turning-Point* one of the best pictures seen on the Soviet screen in recent years.



*Still from the film THE GREAT TURNING-POINT. German surrender*



## SERGEI PROKOFYEV



Portrait of Sergei Prokofiev by Pyotr Konchalovsky

### I

Sergei Prokofiev is a man to whom life means creating, embodying in his art the ravings of his inner being. Like Emile Zola, he might well take for his motto the ancient saying "Nulla dies sine linea", although it would be hard indeed to find a day in his life during which no more than the one line was produced. Were we to make a count of all that has come from the pen of this composer, now in his prime, we should see an amount of work reminiscent of the achievements of the masters of the past.

A brief enumeration of Prokofiev's works will give the following impressive list: seven operas, including the children's operas; six ballets; five symphonies; four cantatas; twenty-five symphonic works (overtures, suites, symphonic poems, and so on); five concertos for pianoforte; two for violin and one for 'cello; more than ten instrumental chamber ensembles; nine sonatas, over a hundred pieces for the pianoforte, over fifty vocal works—choruses, romances and adaptations of folk songs, the music for numerous film and stage productions; marches for wind instruments; transcriptions of Schubert's waltzes and of Buxtehude's pieces for the organ. The list speaks for the versatility of Prokofiev's art which has manifested itself in practically every genre.

Like Rachmaninov, Prokofiev has sought other fields besides that of composition. We have seen him for many years now appearing on concert platforms as a first-class pianist and admirable conductor. He is moreover a profound student of classic and modern literature; a penetrating critic, a talented publicist, endowed with genuine polemic ardour, always the man of unswerving

principles, honest and severe. He has an infinite capacity for labour. The ideas and musical conceptions in his teeming brain he handles with the strenuous energy of the master, never content with anything less than the perfection of detail and the monolithic entirety of a work. It has not all been plain sailing. Prokofiev has had his setbacks, but never a compromise with conscience; ringing out in every bar of his music you can hear Martin Luther's words: "Hier stehe ich, ich kann nicht anders."

His music is always bold, always daring. Many have detected in his art a challenge to the proprieties; a subversion of time-honoured musical traditions, a hand raised against sainted hallowed ground.

One critic has even said that Sergei Prokofiev did not enter into the history of music, but broke into it, so unusual was the work of this young composer, so peculiarly his own, his musical speech. His singularity, however, was no mere show of originality, no shallow experimentation, for we must never forget that in his art the composer utilized the vast experience of Russian musical classicism. From his great masters—Taneyev, Rimsky-Korsakov and Lyadov, Prokofiev inherited besides the national peculiarities of Russian music, the steady progressiveness, the scorn of routine and cliché, the daring of constructive searchings that were always its distinguishing traits.

### II

The surroundings in which the composer's childhood and youth were passed were in every way conducive to the development of gifts that showed themselves at a very early age.

Sergei Prokofiev was born on April 23rd, 1891, in the Ekaterinoslav province (now Dnipropetrovsk Region), in the Ukraine. The village of Sontsovka, his birthplace, belonged to one Sontsov, a landlord on whose estate the composer's father was employed as steward.

The boy inherited his musical ability from his mother, who was a good pianist and loved to play Beethoven and Chopin to the home circle. Sergei Prokofiev was only five and a half years old when he wrote his first piece which was rapidly followed by a waltz, a march and a rondo. At the age of nine he ventured on opera, first composing a three-act opera he called *The Giant*, and then beginning another entitled *On the Desert Islands*. In 1902, his parents acquainted the youthful composer with Taneyev who on hearing the overture to *On the Desert Islands* appreciated the boy's talent and handed him over to Reinhold Glière, one of his favourite pupils. Glière, who is now President of the Union of Soviet Composers, promptly went to Sontsovka to begin his musical studies with young Prokofiev.

Here is what the composer himself says in his biography about these lessons which he always regarded as the beginning of his musical education.

"Glière was a born teacher who cleverly combined instruction in harmony with free composition and the explanation of musical forms and instrumentation. Lessons over, he would heartily enjoy a game of chess or croquet, or accept a challenge to a duel, using pistols worked by means of a spring—the latter feat," as Prokofyev writes, "entirely captivating my heart. He explained the form of the song to me," Prokofyev continues, "and this marked the beginning of a series of pieces for the pianoforte which I thereafter composed with great regularity for the next six years—a dozen a year, giving them the not very happy appellation of *Little Songs*. Playing Beethoven's sonatas to me, Glière would give me a general idea of the sonata form and when a phrase characteristic of some instrument from a symphonic orchestra occurred, he would say to me: 'Look—this melody might be played by a flute,' or: 'this flourish would sound well on a trumpet, and in a lower key, by two French horns,' etc. Of course, this was all very elementary, but the examples clung to my memory, and when I went up to town the next autumn and heard an orchestra, I very quickly found my bearings and experienced no feeling of bewilderment or confusion from the medley of sound."

It was only natural that the lad should now be eager to try his hand at orchestration. With the greatest ease he wrote a symphony in four movements which that same autumn was shown to Taneyev in Moscow, gaining the master's approval. But in giving his opinion of the work the composer had said good-naturedly, that the music of the symphony was rather too simple. The words struck home and young Prokofyev got down to work in search of new means of expression. On his return to Sontsova, the boy continued composing and by the next summer had completed *The Feast During the Plague*, an opera based on a theme by Pushkin, and written under the guidance of Glière.

The year 1904 saw Prokofyev taking the entrance examination to the St. Petersburg Conservatory. The lad brought to the examination room where Rimsky-Korsakov was present, two huge folders containing his numerous manuscripts including symphonies, sonatas and four operas. The fourth of those was *Undine*, an unfinished work which he had begun while at St. Petersburg. It really seemed as if an evil fate hung over de la Motte Fouqué's lovely legend. Chaikovsky, as we know, burnt his opera written on the same subject; Rachmaninov's conception of it was never realized, despite the libretto Modestus Chaikovsky had written specially for him, and here was Prokofyev stuck at Act III.

Prokofyev spent 10 years at the St. Petersburg Conservatory, studying under the best Russian masters: Rimsky-Korsakov, and Lyadov for composition, Nikolai Cherepnin in the conductors' class, and Anna Essipova for the pianoforte.

These years saw the maturing of the student's mastery both in composition and performance and brought with them excellent knowledge of musical literature. Insistent searchings for new paths were productive

of a number of new works, among them two symphonic poems—*Dreams* and *Autumn Moods*; a symphonetta and *Magdalena*, a one-act opera. The composer devoted particular attention to his compositions for the pianoforte which he performed himself.

In 1911, Jorgenson, the Moscow publishing firm, issued the First Sonata and Twelve Pieces for Pianoforte by Prokofyev whose compositions now began to appear regularly in print, attracting the growing interest of the critics.

That same year the two symphonic poems—*Dreams* and *Autumn Moods* were performed for the first time in Moscow, under the baton of Constantine Saradzhiev, who had first heard of them from Nikolai Myaskovsky, Prokofyev's fellow student in Lyadov's class, and now a well-known composer. Vladimir Derzhanovsky, another prominent figure in the musical world of Moscow also became interested in the young Prokofyev whom he encouraged both as composer and as critic printing his notices in *Music*, a periodical of which he was editor and publisher.

"I shouldn't make a half-bad critic, I think," Prokofyev wrote in his diary at the time, "and could snarl with the best of them." But his work as composer and performer had greater attractions for him than the career of critic.

In the summer of 1912, he played his First Pianoforte Concerto in Moscow and had an excellent reception, and in the spring of 1914 his performance of the Concerto at the final examination at the Conservatory gained him the Rubinstein prize.

His second concerto and the new pianoforte pieces of that period gave rise to violent discussions. The first performance of the concerto, the composer tells us, evoked stormy applause from one section of the public, while others gave vent to their feelings in hissing and catcalls; cries of "To the devil with all this futuristic music!" resounding through the hall.

But Prokofyev was as little affected by these uncomplimentary opinions as was Vladimir Mayakovsky who in pre-revolutionary years also brought down the opprobrium of the conservative circles on his unbowed head.

And it is little wonder that Mayakovsky had such affection for Prokofyev. In Vassili Kamensky's book entitled *Life With Mayakovsky* we read that on one occasion Mayakovsky, while listening to Prokofyev playing the piano, made a sketch of him with the following explanatory inscription: "Sergei Sergeyevich playing on the most sensitive nerves of Vladimir Vladimirovich." Inscribed in a book of Mayakovsky's verses which he presented to Prokofyev are the following words: "To the President of the Department of Music on the Terrestrial Globe from the President of the Department of Poetry on the Terrestrial Globe."

What was it in Prokofyev's music that so appealed to Mayakovsky, that so closely touched the poet who sang of living human emotions and railed at paltry passions?

Let us hear what Lazare Saminsky, the American musicologist, an alumnus of Lya-



ov's class at the St. Petersburg Conservatory, says in his book:

"Prokofyev is satisfied with the direct wisdom of his creative instinct. The latter is proudly manifest in his earliest works, in the youthful exuberance of the *Ugly Duckling* and in the singular and savage eloquence of *The Scythian Suite*, perhaps Prokofyev's most lasting work."

*The Scythian Suite*, composed in 1914, was performed for the first time two years later at Petrograd, where, conducted by the composer himself, it astounded the audience by its powerful vitality and colourfulness.

"In some ways *The Scythian Suite* is a counterpart of Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du Printemps*. There is the same invocation of the remote past of pagan Russia, the same primitive directness," writes Nicolas Slonimsky, another American musicologist in his article on Prokofyev (*The International Encyclopedia of Music and Musicians*, edited by Oscar Thompson.)

There certainly are points of similarity between these works of the two Russian masters. Both *Le Sacre du Printemps* and *The Scythian Suite* resounded with particular force at a time when music, literature and art of the day reflected intimate moods, sometimes exquisitely refined, then again morbid, moods that were indulged in by those who were afraid to look real life in the face. In Prokofyev, Mayakovsky recognized reliably sounding the call for a realistic perception of life, for plenitude of healthy feeling, born of strength and lucid thought.

In contrast to the prevailing enervation, acidity and inanity, Prokofyev juxtaposed the resilient, irrepressible, spontaneous movement so characteristic of most of his compositions. While singing love of life, Prokofyev in his *Miniatures* inclines to the grotesque and to biting ridicule. It is in this spirit that his *Sarcasms* and his ballet *The Jester* were conceived.

### III

The première of *The Jester* took place in Paris on May 17th, 1921. This ballet, like *The Scythian Suite* and the ballets *The Steel Heap* and *The Prodigious Son*, was produced in the initiative of Sergei Diaghilev, the great impresario and patron of the ballet who lent his support to Prokofyev when he was touring abroad in 1918 and was giving numerous concerts which did not however hinder him from writing new musical compositions.

In December 1921, *Love for Three Oranges*, Prokofyev's opera written after the famous story by Carlo Gozzi, had its première in Chicago. The work had been conceived years before, in Russia, with which the author never lost touch during his absence from home, exchanging letters with friends and sending critical articles to the Soviet musical magazines.

In 1922, as soon as the music publishing business was properly started, Prokofyev's works began to come out in the Soviet Union where his return from a protracted journey was eagerly awaited.

Speaking in his biography of the causes for his delay in returning, the composer writes: "At that time I had not yet grasped to their full extent the significance of events proceeding in the U.S.S.R. These events demanded the collaboration of all citizens—not only of political people as I had thought at one time, but also of those engaged in the arts. Another thing that drew me," he went on to say, "was the current of a settled life—the publication of my works, the concerts, the wish to prove myself right in arguments with other composers and with other musical trends. Things were happening at home, too. My mother's long illness and her death, my marriage and the birth of a son."

While abroad, Prokofyev wrote, beside the ballets and operas already mentioned, a Third Concerto for Pianoforte, conceived and roughly sketched at home in Russia, two Concertos for Violin and a number of other works. Many of them seem to have lost the freshness and spontaneity emanated by his earlier works—the composer having in those years come under the influence of the cross-currents operating in a Western musical culture caught in the throes of a post-war crisis.

There had crept into his art an element of sophistication which is to be detected even in his works written in the twenties that seem to be developing along the lines arising in an earlier period. This is partly true of his symphonies. The summer of 1925 saw the première of his Second Symphony; the summer of 1929, of his Third; and the autumn of 1930, at Boston, the Fourth.

If Prokofyev called his First Symphony, performed for the first time at Petrograd in 1918, "the classical" stressing thereby his ties with the great masters of the past, the "barbarisms" of the Second Symphony make that work somewhat akin to *The Scythian Suite*. The composer resorted to highly intricate sound combinations and a gorgeous instrumentation which detract from its artistry, the emotional content being superseded by the constructivism, then in vogue in Western Europe.

The Third Symphony was born of his *Angel of Fire*, an opera Prokofyev had composed after a novel by Valeri Bryussov. The subject was a story connected with the name of the Renaissance writer H. C. Agrippa ab Nettesheym, author of a treatise on "De occulta philosophia". Despite all the composer's efforts this opera was never produced. The Fourth Symphony was evolved from his ballet *The Prodigious Son* which is further evidence, if any were needed, that even the most complicated of Prokofyev's works of this period contained no original conceptions. For the composer who felt deeply the separation from his native land, this was a period of painful searchings.

And yet, despite the crisis he was undergoing, these years brought Prokofyev world fame as composer, pianist and conductor. His concert tours through Europe and the United States were a series of unbroken successes.

In 1926, the *Love for Three Oranges* was performed at Leningrad by Vladimir Dranishnikov, the Russian conductor, and in

the autumn of the same year there was a Berlin première of this opera.

In January 1927, the composer returned to the Soviet Union. He had always been a Soviet citizen, as he himself was never tired of stressing, both in passport and in spirit. He was welcomed by his homeland with open arms, his numerous appearances on concert platforms in Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Kharkov, Odessa and other cities, scoring unusual successes. The same measure of success marked the performances of his symphonic and instrumental chamber works, and particularly his Quintet with wind instruments and the Overture for Seventeen Performers, then played in the Soviet Union for the first time.

In the summer of 1927, Prokofyev attended the Paris première of his ballet *The Steel Leap* based on a theme from Soviet life. This was soon followed by a première of the ballet in London which also evoked tremendous applause although it was criticized by the white-guard emigré press which accused both the author and the producer, Sergei Diaghilev, of "Bolshevik propaganda". His three-month sojourn in the Soviet Union had not, by the way, provided Prokofyev with sufficient impressions for a realistic picture of Soviet life which in this work was portrayed in a decidedly superficial manner.

Following closely on the première of *The Steel Leap* in Paris, came the première, in May 1929, of *The Prodigal Son*, conducted by the composer in person. This was the last production staged by Diaghilev who died shortly afterwards in Venice.

In the early thirties a number of miniatures for the pianoforte came from Prokofyev's pen, partly of a pastoral nature (*The Walk, The Landscape, Pastorale Sonatina*) and partly philosophic and contemplative in concept (*The Thoughts Cycle*). How greatly these pieces differ from his earlier works! Gone is the vivid emotionality and ardent temperament of youth!

It is interesting in this connection to turn to his own views on the subject voiced in a talk with Leon Stein, the American musicologist, apropos of the latter's comments in his *Materials of Contemporary Music* (The Journal of Musicology, Vol. IV, No. 2-3, December 1945).

"Every post-revolutionary or post-innovation period is necessarily followed by a quiet period of re-orientation and more conservative application. The following excerpt from an interview between Sergei Prokofyev and Olin Downes, which appeared in the *New York Times*, February 4th, 1930, is a corroboration of this fact.

"Why," asked Prokofyev, "do they continue to speak of me only as a satirist or a sarcastic composer, or an enfant terrible of discord, etc.? Perhaps this was true fifteen years ago, when that was my spirit and somewhat my style. But I have left that period behind."

"And what have you become?"

"I hope simpler and more melodic... there has been too much dissonance... I think society has had enough of that. We want... dissonance again relegated to its proper place as one element of music, conting-

ent principally upon the meeting of melodious lines... I think we have gone as far as we are likely to go in the direction of size of dissonance or complexity in music...."

#### IV

The autumn of 1929 saw Prokofyev back in Moscow once more, and from the end of 1932 on, after a series of foreign tours, the composer settled down for good in the Soviet Union. He was particularly struck—to use his own words—"by two things—the unprecedented constructive activity of Soviet composers and the colossal growth of the general musical interest which is so vividly displayed in the vast strata of the totally new audiences now thronging the concert halls."

Yes... tremendous changes had indeed taken place in the composer's country during the fifteen years of his absence. He saw the building of new cities and of a new life; he saw a new society which it was no longer necessary to defy as in bygone years, for now it could teach him, Prokofyev, many a lesson. In his own world conception too tremendous changes had been at work ever since his return to Russia.

His first composition in the years 1930 and 1934 was marked by pungent grotesque and sarcasm—features which had characterized his youth—but now it was an irony no longer aimed at the present as in the pre-revolutionary years, but at the past, far distant, terrible epoch of Paul I. It was from this period that the subject of the film *Lieutenant Kizhey* was taken with its wonderful music by Prokofyev, later incorporated in a symphonic suite which has gained worldwide popularity.

From this former irony and sarcasm he now turned to deep and wholehearted emotions, seeking his images in the world of Shakespeare and Pushkin. Therein was the source of *Egyptian Nights*, a symphonic suite written for the performance staged by the Moscow Kamerny Theatre, and composed of fragments of Shakespeare's *Anthony and Cleopatra*, *Egyptian Nights* by Pushkin and Bernard Shaw's *Caesar and Cleopatra*.

One of the composer's finest works, *Romeo and Juliet*, a ballet after Shakespeare's tragedy, was written in 1935. There is no need for me to repeat here what I wrote in my article *Shakespeare and Russian Music* (*International Literature*, No. 12, 1944) concerning this composition. Let me but stress once again that it is in this ballet that Prokofyev's lyrical talent shines with a transcendent brilliance. This work the composer used later as the foundation for his three suites for symphony orchestra and a cycle of pieces for the pianoforte. These works with the ballet itself brought their author well-merited success. The range of his art was widening, due perhaps to the composer's seeking for inspiration in the treasure store of Pushkin's writings and in the life surging around him.

In 1936, when the country was preparing for the centenary of Pushkin's death (January, 1937), Prokofyev wrote his song-cycle to the words of the great poet; the music to



a dramatized version of *Eugene Onegin*, to the tragedy of *Boris Godounov*, and to the film version of *Queen of Spades*.

In 1937 Prokofyev completed an impressive *Cantata* dedicated to the twentieth anniversary of the October Revolution. This was followed, in 1938, by the music to Sergei Eisenstein's film, *Alexander Nevsky*, written after Prokofyev's return from a journey abroad which this time included a visit to Hollywood. The story of the film, recounting the defeat of the Teutonic knights by Prince Alexander Nevsky on the ice of Lake Peipus in 1242, so captivated the composer that he used the musical material of the picture in a heroic cantata composed some time later.

This cantata, which had its first performance in Moscow, in April 1939, is a hymn to patriotism, a song of fervent love of the Country.

The same theme is developed in Prokofyev's subsequent works: in his *Zdravitsa*, written in honour of Stalin's sixtieth birthday, and presented for the first time in Moscow, on December 21st, 1939, and in *Semyon Kotko*, an opera based on episodes from the Civil War, after the play *A Soldier Returns From the Front*, by Valentin Katayev and produced at the Moscow Stanislavsky Theatre in the summer of 1940.

The war came, and to its stirring events Prokofyev responded with *The Year 1941*, an orchestral suite first played at a recital of his own works which the composer gave in the autumn of 1941 at Pyatigorsk in the Caucasus.

The theme of patriotism is again vividly dominant in the epic opera *War and Peace* based on Tolstoy's great novel. Now in rehearsal at the Leningrad Opera House, it was first heard in a concert performance at Moscow. This same theme dominates a number of songs and marches written during the war.

The versatility of Prokofyev's talent revealed itself, too, in his new instrumental works—the Seventh and Eighth Sonatas for the pianoforte and the Fifth Symphony, three compositions which gained him a Stalin Prize, the title of Honoured Art Worker, and the Order of the Red Banner of Labour, one of the highest decorations in the country. In these compositions the images are philosophically conceived, imbued with profound emotions, part and parcel of our epoch, its very essence and breath. The thrilling tragic note of the Eighth Sonata and the Fifth Symphony, the dramatic agitation of the Seventh Sonata, the moving lyricism of *Cinderella*, the new ballet recently presented by the Bolshoi Theatre, are eloquent testimony to Prokofyev's never dormant creativeness.

Francois Couperin once said: "I love more that which moves me than that which strikes me." This sentiment might well be repeated by Prokofyev, now that he has achieved the highest aim in art—the profoundly human touch which is so marked a feature of the composer's latter works.

Professor IGOR BOELZA

## THE WATER-COLOURS OF ARTHUR FONVISIN

Russian art has known some remarkable water-colour painters including Karl Brullov, Alexander Ivanov and Mikhail Vrubel. Interest in this medium has not slackened as is shown by the work of one of the most outstanding Soviet artists, Sergei Gerassimov, who has many water-colours to his credit. Moreover, an increasing number of painters whose interests are centred in the possibilities of water-colour are enthusiastically devoting themselves entirely to this medium. One of the most successful of these is Arthur Fonvisin.

The artist is usually governed by technique, which sets certain limits on his intentions, and dictates or at least determines to some extent his conceptions. But Fonvisin has gained the mastery over his medium. He can convey the feeling of transparent distances by clear washes of colour, and give to decorative leaves a powdering of colour which suggests that a fantastic flower-pollen has settled on the picture.

His art displays a great economy in the use of his medium; movement, space and form are suggested by mere touches. Ordinary white paper is made to sparkle and glow in a subtle colour composition. He avoids detail and thus maintains the feeling of the whole: out of the broad, breezy play of colour, from the magic of suggestion and mirage, emerges the concrete image, and in romantic

delineation the traits of individuality and character may be traced. This artist has his own favourite subjects. Foremost among them is the theatre, or rather, faces illuminated by the footlights. Among his portraits—portraiture is his principal genre—we find a gallery of Soviet actors and actresses: Moskvín, Kachalov, Michoels, Zerkalova, Babanova, Maretskaya, Semyonova, Gliezer. The key to understanding of his work lies in the external fact that his sitters are as a rule stage people. His "theatrical" quality, his dramatic instinct is responsible for the characteristics of his artistic thought. The sitter is more than a model for a portrait, he is a "character" of a play, which, if not existent, is at least possible. The thought half-expressed, the half-smile and glance, the foreshortening, all have an inner dynamic quality, a dramatic potency, ready to escape and express themselves in dramatic action. For example, in the portrait of the singer Petker, the atmosphere of the concert-platform, the flourish of music, the burst of applause are all conveyed through this woman standing, drawing on her glove.

As so often is the case when the artist himself possesses a clear-cut individuality, Fonvisin's portraits, which differ so widely in externals, retain an inner resemblance, the sitters are akin and we recognize them by almost elusive psychological characteristics.

The women who appear to have been created for picturesque effect drawn from their airy silks, gauze, lace and veils, are alive with an inner tension and emotion, like an actress making her appearance in a new play.

Not infrequently, Fonvisin paints his sitter in a definite role, wearing costume and make-up. He has done many such portraits of Babanova and Gliezer, actresses of the Moscow Theatre of Drama.

His characterization of the role is so penetrating that one actress said she had discovered in her portrait many touches that she afterwards used in her acting.

Sometimes when Fonvisin does not emphasize theatrical drama in his subjects he succeeds in conveying the charm of soft femininity and simplicity, or the spirituality of lyrical portraiture. Examples of this treatment are the paintings of the woman in green and of his wife.

The magic of the stage suggested the water-colour series *The Circus*. The graceful, rhythmic motion of the circus horses is shown in a brilliantly-lit arena; garlands of flowers, blood-red waving plumes, the deep crimson velvet curtains and the overwhelming and swift rhythm of the movement are dynamically and choreographically adjusted simultaneously. The centre is occupied by the lightly touched-in figure of the equestrienne in her transparent skirt that seems woven of light and air, the circus-rider soaring with the grace of a ballet dancer on the horse's back, a symbol of this world of buffoonery and make-believe.

Lately Fonvisin has been engaged on another series of drawings. *Songs* is the title he



Fonvisin. A portrait

gives to these pictures in miniature. Although they conjure up song-texts, they should not be regarded as illustrations of such. They were inspired by Russian 19th-century ballads, with their rhythm, naive sentimentality and touching lyricism.

The poetic lore of the Russian provinces, as distinct from the folklore of the peasants, the poetic vernacular of the suburban life reflected with such delicate irony by Leskov and Ostrovsky, is delightfully expressed in Fonvisin's pictures.

The characteristic and traditional variety of these romantic themes and images have been reproduced by him: the driver and his three-horse sleigh, the tinkle of bells and the strumming of a guitar, meetings, partings, pursuit and abduction, the typical hero and heroine of the ballad—the dashing hussar and the muslin-gowned girl, in love, and, more often than not, deserted and left in anguish. Here are debauchery, sensual and often "fatal" passion, and at times a light irony which brings out the "sugariness" and toy-like quality of these conventionalized characters in pictures. Fonvisin's keen sense of the dramatic conveyed in the portraits, as a latent and concealed possibility, is here given free rein. The artist arranges his settings like a producer and compresses an intense and interesting drama into his canvas. The "narrative" never deviates into a "literary" relation, but is expressed in the clearest language of painting, brushwork and colour. In his *Songs* we discover other traits of Fonvisin's art. Here he depicts his beloved horses, either in full gallop, or gently bowing their heads as they are taken out of harness; he introduces nature scenes into his compositions—landscapes, frosty mists with smoke curling upwards from chimneys,



Fonvisin. A portrait



the golden autumn stillness in the outskirts of an old world Volga town, twinkling lights at eventide or a Russian country road disappearing into the boundless steppe. These reveal new horizons of an artist who moves away from the artificial and conventional world of the theatre to living nature. Fonvisin's talent as a landscape painter is demonstrated in an interesting series—the Central Asian water-colours. These he painted in Kazakhstan. Wartime and evacuation took many artists to different parts of this country and influenced their work. Umarkand with its dazzling colour and the inimitable beauty of its architecture became the second Rome for some artists.

But Fonvisin was not attracted by the usual ornamental and decorative aspect of the East. He painted the rather dreary landscapes of Kazakhstan's coal districts, the harshness and asceticism of the country with its bare desolate steppes. The water-colours he painted here seem at first glance greyish-blue monochromes, but upon closer inspection, one discerns a delicate transparent colour scheme of blues, mauves, greys, with the deepening rose and glowing yellow of sunset; his palette has a noble range, and is far from producing a motley, spotty effect.

There is something Biblical and patriarchal about the boundless steppes, the vast

tranquil sky of his paintings. There is a suggestion of the old epics, too, about the Kazakhs with their shepherd's staff, tall pointed fur hats, their camels, now weary, moulting and prosaic enough, or again majestic and dignified; the artist never tires of painting them. He has felt deeply the stern harmony of this monotonous landscape and discerned its hidden poetry. It becomes understandable to us why he gave the title *Fairy Tale* to his picture of the solemn progress of a camel ridden by a young Kazakh girl in emerald green and led by an old man. In this world where only the humming wires of the telegraph poles remind us of the present day, the artist sensed the primeval and eternal, and thus a mysterious aura of the legendary past arises naturally and as though casually around an obscure and it would seem ordinary landscape.

In the work of this artist there is much that is vague and yet his romantic fantasies possess an original realism, transformed and poeticised, but always interesting and expressive.

Fonvisin has his own individual style, his own way of regarding the world, and his work is at once recognizable.

ELENA TAGER

# NEWS AND VIEWS

## LITERATURE

### ACTIVITIES OF SOVIET WRITERS

As a rule a writer, while working on one book, gradually accumulates material for the next. The plans of a writer are seldom confined to one theme, or to a limited circle of types.

On the eve of the war many Soviet writers had ambitious plans. The war introduced substantial changes into these plans. During those years some writers, under the influence of the grandiose events, devoted themselves altogether to battle themes, while others, on the contrary, felt an urge to study carefully the glorious past of their country's history.

Those who became war correspondents, reporters for this period, simply had no time left to write books of any length.

For a time, during the first few months after V-Day, no one could tell which of the writers would return immediately to what was conceived five or six years ago, and which would devote themselves to depicting the stormy war years. Only now can we gather the plans of some of the writers for the immediate future.

Valentin Katayev, author of many books both for children and adults, having completed his novel *Son of the Regiment* (for an abridged version see *International Literature*, No. 11, 1945), has started work on a novel, *The Pioneers*. In this work Katayev will depict the further fate of the heroes of his well-known children's book *A Lone Sail Looms* . . . which was filmed a couple of years ago. The boys have grown up. The war caught them in the same town, in Odessa, but one of them is a Communist Party functionary, and another a lawyer. In his new book the writer relates their experiences during the war years.

Nikolai Pogodin, playwright, author of *The Man With a Rifle*, and the novelist Pyotr Pavlenko are working on a play dealing with the battle of Moscow in 1941.

Vsevolod Ivanov, novelist and playwright, author of the play *Armoured Train 14-69*, which had a run of several years on the stage of the Moscow Art Theatre, is finishing two books started earlier, a collection of tales of fantasy and a novel *The Treasures of Alexander the Great*. The action of this imaginative novel which takes place during the World War II is laid in Central Asia, where Alexander the Great conducted his expedition.

Mikhail Prishvin, bard of Russian nature, author of the books *Spring Unadorned* (see *International Literature*, No. 7, 1944), *Ginseng* and others, is completing a fairy tale about the construction of the White Sea Canal. He has been working on this tale for over ten years. It will form a complete book.

Alexander Chakovsky, a young author, has written the second part of his book, *It Happened in Leningrad* (for an abridged version see *International Literature*, No. 4, 1945). The second part bears the name of the heroine of the novel, *Lyda*.

Sergei Borodin, author of the historical novel, *Dmitri Donskoy* is still working on a series of novels from the history of the Russian state, conceived long before the war. He has finished collecting the material for a book on Ivan Kalita, founder of Moscow.

Venjamin Kaverin, having completed his big novel *Two Captains* has started work on a new novel. Its heroine is a Russian woman. The author intends to depict her life's path, beginning from childhood.

Rafail Fraerman, a popular children's author, is writing a novel *Long Cruise*, about two young girls, just graduated from school and starting out in life.

This by no means exhausts the list of writers who at the moment are working on big and small books. In future issues we shall report on the work of many other writers, poets and critics.

### N. N. ZLATOV RATSKY

One hundred years have elapsed since the birth of Nikolai Zlatovratsky, a chronicler of Russian country life.

His first book *Peasant Jurors* which appeared in 1874 in the magazine *Otechestvennyye Zapiski* (The Home Chronicle) brought literary fame to the author. It described the peasants, their troubles and interests. At the end of the seventies he published a book, *Golden Hearts*, and later a full-length novel *Foundations* which the critics considered a prominent literary event of those times.

The Russian critic Pavel Sakulin described *Foundations* as "a great chronicle of the struggle between the old and the new village." In *Foundations* the writer reproduced a succession of scenes from the life and customs of the Russian peasantry.

Many essays and stories about Russian village life have also come from Zlatovratsky's pen: *The Little White Old Man*, *Abraham*, *The Village King Lear*. Almost all these stories were based on direct impressions of the writer formed in the Vladimirsky province which was his birthplace.

Zlatovratsky never understood the great contradictions of the peasant life of those times. But as a realistic writer, he produced many valuable, true, honest, artistic pictures of that life. Leo Tolstoy, who frequently visited Zlatovratsky during the eighties and nineties and conducted a correspondence with him, highly valued Zlatovratsky for these qualities.

During the last years of his life (Zlatovratsky died in 1911) the writer published a series of



essays on the period of the sixties, with a general title *How It Happened*.

In their time Zlatovratsky's books played a striking role in the history of Russian social ideas.

## A HISTORY OF THE WESTERN THEATRE

The Research Institute of Theatre and Music in Leningrad is issuing *Essays on the History of the West-European Theatre of the 19th Century* in four volumes, edited by Stepan Mokulsky.

The first volume, dedicated to the French theatre of the first half of the 19th century, is already in print. The abundant material, altogether over 500 pages, includes chapters on classical playwrights of French literature, such as Victor Hugo, Alexander Dumas, Alfred de Musset, Honoré de Balzac and others.

The second volume, now in preparation, will be on the theatre in England, U.S.A., Germany, Austria, Italy, Spain, Norway and Sweden during the first half of the 19th century.

The remaining two volumes will deal with the theatre of the second half of the 19th century.

## "KREUTZER SONATA" ON THE STAGE

Leo Tolstoy's *Kreutzer Sonata* was written after prolonged work and nine different versions. The subject was related to Tolstoy, a well-known Russian actor Andreyev-Lak, who in turn heard this tragic story from a chance companion in a railway carriage. Suren Kocharian, the gifted actor was the first to perform the *Kreutzer Sonata* as Tolstoy meant it to be read—as one whole—as a soliloquy.

At the first public reading Professor Nikolai Gushev, Tolstoy's secretary and friend made an introductory speech.

## IN VALERI BRYUSOV'S HOUSE

A small quaint house standing among the tall buildings on Meshchanskaya Street in Moscow, bears the following inscription: "Poet Valeri Bryusov lived and died here."

The poet's widow, Johanna Bryusova, translator, author of various memoirs about Bryusov, his devoted assistant in literary work, receives visitors in a large study, lined with books. Everything breathes here of a tentative attitude to the poet's name, to his huge literary legacy.

During the closing years of Bryusov's life there lay on his desk the manuscript of a novel on the life of ancient Greece, plans for various articles and the book *Euphonia* from the series *The Science of Poetry*. On looking through the author's books and memoranda, one is amazed by his grandiose plans and the variety of his interests. He had conceived: a volume *Humanity's Dreams* which was to become "an almanac of world poetry", an epopee in prose *A Film of the Centuries*, which was to embody sixty-six pictures on the life of the people of various times and countries; a scientific novel of fantasy *An Expedition to Mars*, and a his-

torical novel on the period of Peter the Great.

In Bryusov's literary archive there are notes about books and articles of all times and nations. The material preserved in Bryusov's study is evidence not only of the poet's extraordinary erudition, but also reflects his methods of work. A special cupboard holds the sources, from which the poet obtained information for his historical novel *The Angel of Flames*. Here are atlases, maps and books on the 16th century, even the four-volume *Infernal Lexicon* published in Paris in 1825. Bryusov ceaselessly collected material in Russia and ordered books from abroad.

Many books of his personal library, consisting of five thousand volumes, are marked with the poet's own notes, often made in the same language as the book. Knowing Bryusov's linguistic ability, one is not surprised at the abundance of books in English, French, Italian, Spanish, German, Czech, Swedish. There are also many dictionaries of ancient and modern oriental languages: Arabic, Persian, Armenian, Japanese. . . .

... The door of this quiet study, where everything emanates a creative enthusiasm, a meticulous mental activity, is closed with a feeling of great respect. Emerging into the noisy street, we glance once more at the house where the Soviet poet lived and worked. We recall his characteristic face with the high forehead of a scientist, the shock of grey hair, the broad Mongolian cheekbones, the alert penetrating eyes, and the pointed beard. . . . And through the large window, filled with warm light, we involuntarily imagine this head bent over the writing-table.

## IN THE DONSKOY MONASTERY

Old Moscow was famous for its churches. The poets of the 19th century called it the "goldenheaded" Moscow. One of the most valuable architectural monuments of the capital is the Donskoy Monastery, preserved and restored by the Academy of Architecture of the U.S.S.R.

These monuments recall many historical events. Under the old lime-trees of the Donskoy Monastery lies the grave of Pyotr Chaadayev, a friend of Pushkin and a prominent philosopher and publicist. A brief inscription on the modest tombstone states that Pyotr Chaadayev, author of *Philosophical Letters* and *The Apology of Madness*, "ended his days on April fourteenth in the year 1856."

We are also reminded of the Pushkin period by the tombstone over the graves of members of the poet's family—his grandmother and aunt and his uncle, the poet Vassili Pushkin, who was well known in literary circles of those days.

We are transferred into the remote eighteenth century by monuments to the fabulist Ivan Dmitriev and the poet Mikhail Kherskov, who wrote the epopee *Rossiada*. Here too is the grave of Alexander Sumarokov, author of the tragedies *Khorev*, *Sinav* and *Truvor* and the first director of the Russian State Theatre.

Verses by Gavriil Derzhavin, the famous poet of the 18th century, are engraved on the tombstone of Princess Anna Gorchakova, sister of Fieldmarshal Suvorov.

Here is the fine tombstone over the grave of Ossip Bauvet, a prominent architect of the 19th century, who planned the original Bolshoi Theatre House, later reconstructed in the middle of the 19th century. Unfortunately one of Bauvet's best creations, Prince Gagarin's Palace, which housed the Book Chamber of the U.S.S.R., has almost completely disappeared. It was destroyed by Hitler's bombs in 1941.

The monuments of the Donskoy Monastery are not only of a literary and cultural interest: many of them are of independent artistic value, representative of Russian sculpture of the 19th century.

### ENGLISH LITERATURE IN THE U.S.S.R.

Some twenty-seven million copies of the works of English writers have been published in the Soviet Union between the years 1917 and 1944.

This figure includes the works of British authors beginning with ancient history and ending with contemporary writers. The following review traces the publication of works by English authors up to the 19th century.

In 1933 the Publishing House *Academia* issued the *Irish Sagas* translated by Professor A. Smirnov. A translation of the Beowulf was printed in a reader on Western-European literature, compiled by Professor R. Shor. The same book contained a translation of *Brunanburh*. In 1941 *The Academy of Sciences Publishing House* issued 3,000 copies of Langland's *Piers Plowman*.

Translations by Ivan Kashkin of several of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* appeared in the magazines *International Literature* (1940), *Krasnaya Nov* (1940), *Literary Critic* (1940). A translation of several of the *Canterbury Tales* by Yuri Remennikov was published in the *Annals of the Herzen Pedagogical Institute of Leningrad*. A translation of the prologue, made by O. Rumer, may be found in the reader on Western-European literature. Ivan Kashkin's full translation of the *Canterbury Tales* will soon be published by the *State Literary Publishing House*.

*The Ballads of Robin Hood* was published in 1919 by the *World Literature Publishing House*.

English folk ballads were published in the magazine *Zvezda* in 1939 and in the Purishev's reader.

The *Children's Publishing House* (*Detgiz*) has issued 50,000 copies of a book compiled by Professor Mikhail Morozov entitled *Ballads and Songs of the English People*. *English Ballads and Songs*, translated during the war years by the well-known poet Samuil Marshak were published by the *State Literary Publishing House* in editions totalling 25,000 copies.

Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* was published by the *Academia* and *State Literary Publishing House* in editions totalling over 50,000 copies. The reader on Western-European literature of the Renaissance period, compiled by

B. Purishev, contains translations of English poets of the Renaissance—Spencer, Sidney, Donne, Skelton, Wyatt, Surrey and Raleigh. The same reader contains translations from Heywood, Lyly, Lodge, Nash, Greene, Marlowe, Webster, Dekker, Beaumont and Fletcher.

*The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus* (1588) by Shakespeare's predecessor, Christopher Marlowe, translated by M. Mikhailov, a Russian poet of the 19th century, was published in the collection of works by the latter, printed by the *Academia Publishing House*. A translation of Marlowe's tragedy *Edward the Second* was issued in the magazine *Leningrad* (1941).

The English writer best known to the Soviet reader through the medium of translations and also in the original, is, of course, Shakespeare. Between 1917 and 1944 Shakespeare's works have appeared in seventeen languages of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. in editions totalling 1.5 million copies. *Hamlet* was published twenty-five times, in editions totalling half a million copies in the Russian, Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Armenian, Azerbaijan, Georgian, Kazakh, Kirghiz, Chuvas, Jewish, Finnish and other languages.

*Othello* had seventeen editions totalling 100,000 copies in twelve languages; *King Lear*—ten editions of 80,000 copies in five languages; *Macbeth*—nine editions of 55,000 copies in five languages; *Romeo and Juliet*—ten editions of 127,000 copies in five languages.

Ben Jonson's works were published by the *Academia Publishing House* in two volumes. As early as 1920 Jonson's comedy *Epicoene or the Silent Woman* appeared as a separate book. Jonson selections, translated by the well-known Soviet poet Eduard Bagritsky, were published in the *Literaturnaya Gazeta* (1936) and in other literary journals.

Fletcher's *The Spanish Curate*, translated by one of the leading Soviet translators, Mikhail Lozinsky, was issued by the *State Literary Publishing House* and *Art* in editions totalling about 20,000 copies. In 1938 the *State Literary Publishing House* published Fletcher's comedy *The Tamer Tamed*.

The *State Literary Publishing House* issued in 1938 an anthology of Renaissance plays including Heywood's *The Fair Maid of the West*, Dekker's *The Honest Whore* and Fletcher's *The Tamer Tamed* all translated by Ivan Axyonov.

The reader on Western-European literature of the 17th century, compiled by B. Purishev, contains translations of extracts from Milton's *Paradise Lost*, his sonnets: *On the Late Massacre in Piedmont*, *To the Lord General Cromwell*, *May 1652*, and poems by other poets of the Revolution and Restoration periods.

The reader on the literature of the 18th century, compiled by Anikst, Galitsky and Eichenholz, includes a translation of Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* and essays by Steele and Addison.

Swift and Defoe enjoy great popularity in the Soviet Union. One of the most popular books among Soviet children is Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* published in thirty languages



of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. in editions totalling 1,290,000 copies.

*Gulliver's Travels* was issued seventeen times in the U.S.S.R. in editions totalling 1,600,000 copies in thirty-eight languages, including tongues of peoples of the U.S.S.R. who before the Revolution didn't even possess an alphabet: the Kumik, Buriat, Dungan, Kabarda, Komi, Khakassia, Mari, Mordva and other languages. *Gulliver's Travels* was published many times by the *Children's Publishing House* in special versions for children.

Excerpts from Richardson's novels were published in the reader on Western-European Literature by P. Kogan and in the Reader on the Literature of the 18th Century by Anikst, Galitsky and Eichenholz. The latter also contains early translations of poems by Thomson, Young, Gray, Macpherson and Chatterton.

Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* was published in editions totalling 40,000 copies, Smollett's *The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle* had an edition of 20,000.

Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey* had three editions totalling 76,000 copies.

Plays by English playwrights of the 18th century, Sheridan and Goldsmith, are very popular in the U.S.S.R. These include *St. Patrick's Day*, *A Trip to Scarborough*, *The Rivals*, *The School for Scandal* by Sheridan, and Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer*. They were published several times.

Robert Burns' poems enjoy great popularity in the U.S.S.R. In 1936 a translation of Burns' poems by Tatyana Shchepkina-Kupernik was published with a circulation of 10,000 copies. Marshak, too, has done some excellent Burns translations. The Marshak translations form part of the book of English songs and ballads.

## MUSIC

### TWELVE OUT OF A THOUSAND

The competition of young musicians of the U.S.S.R. held recently in Moscow attracted considerable attention. The gathering

continued the long established Soviet tradition of arranging competitions of actors, musicians, reciters and choirs both professional and amateur. In their attempts to compete with other participants, young artists developed and polished their talent.

Similarly, the preliminary rounds of the competition activated the pupils of music schools. Throughout the three rounds of the competition youthful talent fought for wide recognition. About six hundred singers, pianists, violinists, and other concert artists took part in the first selection conducted in all constituent republics. Of these 170 were admitted to the second series. And lastly the jurors, consisting of Dmitri Shostakovich, Usei Hadzhibekov, Antonina Nezhdanova, Valeria Barsova and other prominent representatives of the musical world selected seventeen artists for the final competition.

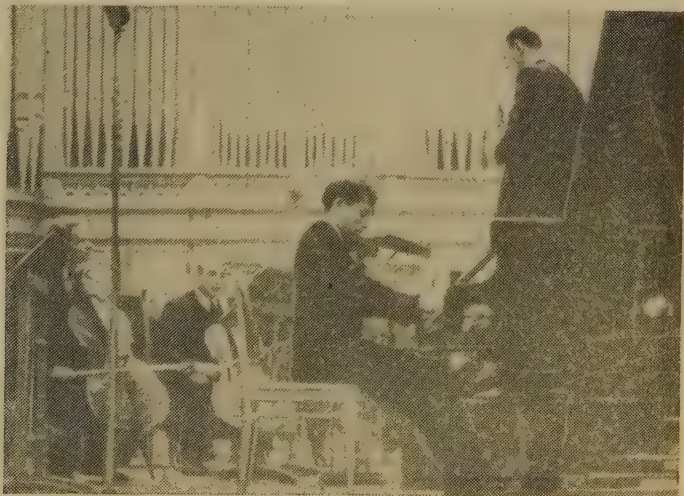
This lasted for three days and took place in the Grand Hall of the Moscow Conservatory. An audience of about 6,000 of Moscow's artists, musicians, composers, art critics, teachers and students listened with great interest to the recitals of the talented young musicians. Among the twelve juvenile competitors who qualified for the title "Laureate of the Competition of Musicians of the U.S.S.R." were four pianists (Svyatoslav Richter, Victor Merzhanov, Yuri Muravlev, Tamara Gusseva), three 'cellists (Mstislav Rostropovich, Fyodor Luzanov, Boris Rentovich), two vocalists (Veronika Borissenko, Nadezhda Sukhovitsyna) and one harpist (Nadezhda Tolstaya). The young laureates represented five cities of the Soviet Union: Moscow, Leningrad, Sverdlovsk, Kiev and Nikolayev.

### RUSSIAN FOLK SONG ON TOUR

Another event in the Soviet musical world was the European tour completed by the State Choir of Russian Folk Song which is conducted by Alexander Sveshnikov.

In the course of a two months' tour the choir visited Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Austria and gave over fifty concerts in Berlin, Prague, Brno, Bratislava, Budapest and Vienna. Sixty thousand people

Victor Merzhanov





*Soyatoslav Richter*

attended these concerts and Czech and Austrian papers emphasized both the quality of singing and the variety of the repertoire. "The choir's greatest achievement," said one of the critics, "was its success in acquainting the audience with the entire profundity, the spirit and variety of Russian folk song."

While on tour the artists met many composers and other prominent musicians. In Prague they were greeted by one of Czechoslovakia's oldest choirs, well known to Moscow concert audiences from its visit to the Soviet capital. At Brno there was another fraternal meeting with the teachers' municipal choir.

### RUSSIAN MILITARY MUSIC

The official history of Russian military music goes back two hundred thirty-five years. When carrying out the reform of the Russian army, Peter I, on February 19th, 1711, issued special order to form military bands in all regiments.

The Moscow State Conservatory has organized a special exhibition devoted to the history of Russian military music. Over four hundred exhibits including many rare etchings, portraits and manuscripts demonstrate the significance and development of music in the Russian army.

Special branches of the exhibition are dedicated to the military bands of the time of Peter the Great, Suvorov's campaigns, and of the Patriotic War of 1812. Another section deals with Russian composers serving as officers in the army. Among them is a portrait of Titov, the "grandfather of the Russian ballad", wearing the St. George's Cross on his chest, and Mussorgsky in the uniform of an officer of the Preobrazhensky Guards regiment.

The Red Army introduced many new elements into the history of Russian army music. Each military unit has its own band and the best of these enjoy great popularity among the Soviet public. They often perform at open concerts and for broadcasts. In Moscow there is a higher school for bandmasters

which turns out well-trained military conductors.

During the Patriotic War musicians shared with the troops all the dangers and hardships of battle life. Often the bandmen had to lay aside their instruments and go into battle.

Many Soviet composers write specially for military bands. A march, composed by the late Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov is very popular in the Red Army. Many successful military marches were composed by Semyon Chernetsky. Marches by Vano Muradeli, Julius Hait, Nikolai Chemberdji are full of rhythm, while Nikolai Myaskovsky wrote his 19th Symphony specially for a brass band.

The repertory of the military bands is very rich. It includes many creations of classical music and of modern composers.

### YOUNG MUSICIANS

When passing through the busy Taganka Street, Moscovites sometimes halt in their walk and listen with surprise. Above the cacophony of traffic they suddenly hear the distant sounds of music. The sounds emerge from a brick building hidden behind an old wooden fence. The building houses the 3rd Military Musical School, one of those training musicians for Red Army bands.

The boys rise at seven at the sound of the bugle. They tumble out of bed and go through their morning exercises. After breakfast they go to the classrooms, which are furnished with music desks instead of benches, and the blackboards are lined for the notes. Each of these budding military musicians has chosen his own "musical weapon"—either a horn, trumpet, or clarinet. Besides practising an instrument they study the theory of music and solfeggio. The classes last for three hours. After lunch, the boys leave for studies in a nearby school, where they take the ordinary educational course.

In the evening they busy themselves with rehearsing and concerts.

Experienced musicians teach in the school. The director, Leonid Bank, who wears five decorations, has devoted a quarter of a cen-



tury to military bands. He is a skillful and careful educator. Who are these youngsters wearing military tunics and epaulettes? Their destinies have many features in common.

Fourteen-year-old Kostya Lazarev comes from Leningrad. His family died during the siege of that city. A military unit adopted the little orphan and with his "foster fathers" he found himself at the 3rd Byelorussian front and eventually reached Königsberg. Here together with other scouts he discovered a group of enemy soldiers hiding in the basement. Now he proudly wears a medal "For Participation in the Patriotic War". . . .

Sixteen-year-old Gennadi Zemerzhinsky is from Kaluga. When the Germans were approaching his home town, he ran away. At first he hung around the reconnaissance patrols. Then he was accepted into a military unit and given a uniform. One dark night near Jurburg, together with his reconnaissance friends, he brought in a German prisoner. Three medals glisten on this boy's tunic.

### NORWEGIAN MUSIC IN MOSCOW

The beginning of the close acquaintance of Russian musicians with the works of Norwegian composers dates from the eighties of the past century, when Chaikovsky and Grieg first became acquainted to be soon fast friends.

At that time a group of composers became prominent in Norway. Their compositions were outstanding for the richness of melody, freshness of harmony and sharpness of rhythm. Rachmaninov, touching on Norwegian mu-

sic in one of his treatises on Russian folk art, said: "Great music invariably develops in those countries particularly rich in folk songs. . . . Thus, for instance, Scandinavia produced such composers as Grieg, Svendsen and Siending."

The interest of Soviet musicians in Norwegian music was evident in a concert given by the singer Vera Davydova.

Davydova's singing of ballads by Kjerulf greatly attracted the audience by their charming simplicity. In rendering romances by Siending the soloist expressed both the tragical hopelessness of the song *Frost* and the serene atmosphere of *May-Day*. Davydova rendered Grieg's song *On the Way Home* as a composer's lyrical hymn to his own country. She was also very much applauded for the lovely Grieg ballads *Spring Day*, *The Princess*, *The Dream* and *Eros*.

### POLISH MUSIC IN MOSCOW

The Russian public has always been interested in Polish music—this is already traditional. The works of Polish composers invariably enjoy sincere admiration in Russia, and this was once more confirmed at a concert of Polish music held in Moscow's finest concert hall, the Grand Hall of the Moscow State Conservatory. The works of Chopin, Moniuszko, Karłowicz, Noskowski and Polish folk songs formed the program.

The performance of Moniuszko's symphonic fantasy *Fairy Tale* came as a real surprise for the audience, since Moniuszko is known in Russia mostly as a composer of opera and chamber songs.

The overture by Noskowski, *Sea Eye*, is an excellent example of a landscape in sounds, a musical canvas. Brilliancy of form is happily combined in the overture with a poetic understanding of nature. The *Lithuanian Rhapsody* by that first-class master of symphony M. Karłowicz attracted attention, on the other hand, by its purely folk themes.

The chief item on the programme was Chopin's Piano Concerto in F-minor brilliantly played by Lev Oborin. Chopin occupies a very special place in the life of this pianist. In 1927, when quite young, Oborin won the first prize for a Chopin performance at the International Competition in Warsaw. Oborin, who is now a mature artist, carries on the best traditions of Russian pianists by his romantic and powerful interpretation of Chopin's music.

### THEATRE

#### [IVAN MOSKVIN]

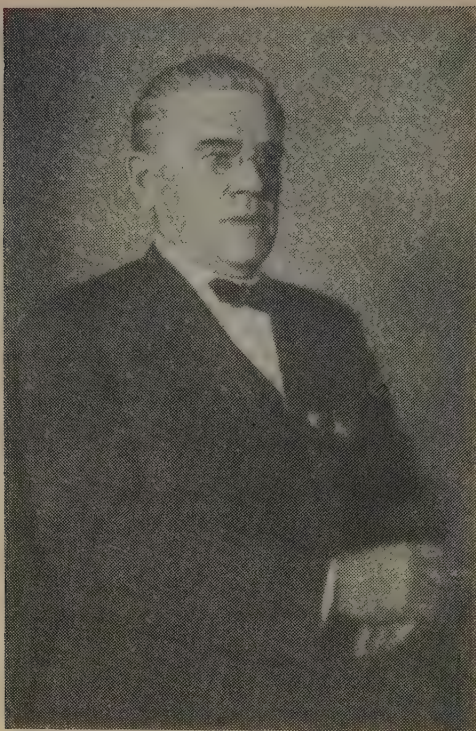
The great hall of the Moscow Art Theatre, usually brilliantly illuminated, was plunged in darkness one day in February. A great artist had died. With the passing of Ivan Moskvin Soviet art had suffered an irreparable loss. Many thousands of people came to the Art Theatre to take a last farewell of their favourite actor.

A raised pedestal, replacing the usual rows of chairs in the auditorium, supported the coffin containing Moskvin's body. The stage curtain was lifted, and there one saw Tsar Fyodor's throne and his royal robes which Moskvin had worn over a period of forty-five years. Forty-five years' performance of one



Vera Davydova





and the same role is an almost unprecedented event in the history of the theatre. In the museum of the Moscow Art Theatre there is a letter, written by Stanislavsky to Moskvin on the occasion of the 600th performance of the play: "It requires great skill to act a minor part over a period of many years, but to act a part of the dimension of Tsar Fyodor for so many years, with the same temperament, intensity and inner feeling, is a shock. Six hundred such shocks form an act of heroism. It helped to create the glory of the Art Theatre both in Moscow, and in Europe and America. . . ."

Moskvin's entire life was linked with that of the Art Theatre. He performed the title role at its opening performance. On October 27th, 1898, an unknown young actor appeared on the stage of a young theatre in the part of Tsar Fyodor Ioannovich. The next day Moskvin was the talk of the town. He was spoken, written and argued about. Moskvin created a character of inimitable simplicity, overwhelming force and sincerity. "Who is he? Where did he come from?"—these were the questions asked by all theatre-goers.

Moskvin was a genuine Moscovite, born in the old Kitai-Gorod (Chinese Town) with its white walls encircling the ancient Kremlin. The life of the merchants' quarters, the Kremlin churches, the pilgrims walking along the dusty highway to the Troitse-Sergievsk Monastery, the stuffy little artisans' workshops, the noisy chatter of the bazaars, the city suburbs and the Moscow villages—all these were known to him from childhood. He was a fine connoisseur of Russia and of the Russians.

Moskvin was a pupil of Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko. He joined the company

of the Art Theatre after graduating from the Philharmonic School, and attracted general attention at his very first appearance. Later Stanislavsky, recalling Moskvin's "debut", wrote: "At the sight of his acting I wept with joy, and with faith that among us were talented people, capable of developing into great actors. It was worth suffering and labouring for!"

A gallery of histrionic portraits, created by Moskvin, reflects all the versatility of the Russian character. He gained the material for his artistic creations from books by Tolstoy, Griboyedov, Gogol, Ostrovsky, Saltykov-Shchedrin, Dostoyevsky, Chekhov, Gorky, always providing the audience with new interpretations of literary characters. Moskvin's talent contained within itself a variety of colours of amazing brightness. No wonder Anton Chekhov, who admired Moskvin's interpretation of the unfortunate clerk Yepikhodov in the *Cherry Orchard*, was so fond of Moskvin.

The persecuted and downtrodden Captain Snegirev in Dostoyevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*; the gentle weak-willed Fedya Protassov from Leo Tolstoy's *The Living Corpse*; the native philosopher, the pilgrim Luka from Gorky's *Lower Depths*, a part taken by Moskvin for over forty years, constantly enriching and perfecting it—such was the range of Moskvin, the tragedian. But the audience knew another Moskvin—the Moskvin of satire. With merciless passion Moskvin exposed not only the comic, but the terrible aspect in the characters of the wilful merchant Khlynov in Ostrovsky's *Hot Temper*, of the scandalmonger Zagoretsky in Griboyedov's *Wit Works Woe*, of the property owner Porfiri in Saltykov-Shchedrin's *Death of Pazukhin*, and, lastly, of the gambler and liar Nozdrev in Gogol's *Dead Souls*.

During the war, Moskvin created an impressive character of the merchant Pribytkov in Alexander Ostrovsky's comedy *The Last Sacrifice*. A Moscow millionaire, first visiting a young widow as a bidder, is enchanted by her purity of heart, by her proud and honest nature. A real affection springs up in the man accustomed to weigh everything in terms of money.

Moskvin's last role was that of a veteran admiral in the play *An Officer of the Fleet* by the Soviet playwright Alexander Kron. In this minor part Moskvin masterly conveyed the kind heart of the old admiral, concealed behind a mask of external severity. He revealed the great moral strength of the admiral, his deep understanding of human nature.

Moskvin combined his passionate creative activities with a busy social life. Already during the first years of Soviet power Moskvin initiated the practice of actor-patrons to the Red Army. He himself took part in thousands of concerts and performances for men and officers. He also worked hard as Deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. This is why people of various ages and professions passed by Moskvin's coffin in token of respect and admiration.

Every five minutes the guard of honour was changed. Moscow's theatrical world was present in the auditorium. There were the



oldest actors of the Maly Theatre—Alexandra Ablochkina, Varvara Ryzhova, Prov Savitsky; the composers Dmitri Shostakovich, Reinhold Glière, Yuri Shaporin, People's Artists Solomon Michoels, Valeria Barsova, Ivan Kozlovsky . . . Olga Knipper-Chekhova stood in the guard of honour. She played Tsarina Irina in the first performance of *Tsar Fyodor*. This prominent actress, widow of Anton Chekhov, was linked with the deceased by half a century of creative friendship. Nearby stood People's Artist of the U.S.S.R. Mikhail Tarkhanov, brother of the deceased. . . .

There were hundreds of telegrams expressing condolence; among them a telegram from the theatre section of the London Society of Cultural Relations with the U.S.S.R. signed by Edith Evans, president of the section. The funeral procession stretched for several blocks. Moskvina was buried in the New Virgin Cemetery, alongside Anton Chekhov, Constantine Stanislavsky, Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko, in the shade of a young cherry orchard.

### VARVARA RYZHOVA'S JUBILEE

The history of the Russian theatre is connected with many glorious dynasties of actors. Entire generations of Shchepkins, Moimovs, Sadovskys devoted themselves to the stage. Varvara Ryzhova, one of the best living actresses of the Maly Theatre also comes from a theatrical family.

Her grandmother, Varvara Borozdina, made her debut on the stage of the Maly Theatre about a hundred years ago; in 1866 her daughter, the well-known comedian Nikolai Mizil, appeared for the first time on the same stage. Her husband, Ivan Ryzhov, also acted at the Maly Theatre, and now her son, Nikolai Ryzhov, representing the fourth generation, is acting together with his mother. For forty-three years the name of Varvara Ryzhova has appeared on the list of the theatre's company, while her actual performing started much earlier, while she was attending the theatre school. She was lucky to have known in her early youth the famous Russian playwright Alexander Ostrovsky, and she had the honour of acting once in

Tolstoy's *Fruits of Education* in the author's presence.

Ryzhova has played a large number of roles. Women of the old Russia are wonderfully interpreted by her: the simple but cautious Domna Panteleyevna (*Talents and Admirers*), the nosy gossip Glafira Petrovna (*The Last Sacrifice*), the cunning and sly Ulita (*The Forest*), Glumova, the dexterous mother of an enterprising son (*Enough Simplicity in Every Wise Man*). . . . For her brilliant performance of these parts Ryzhova has become an acknowledged actress of Ostrovsky, Gogol, Griboyedov—classical Russian writers. But she has also created memorable characters in several modern plays. In Constantine Trennev's *Lyubov Yarovaya* she takes the part of a peasant woman Maria, in Leonid Leonov's *Invasion* the part of the old nurse Demidovna.

On her seventy-fifth birthday, which Varvara Ryzhova celebrated still full of energy and creative vigour, the government awarded her the Order of Lenin. After the play was over, her fellow-actors and representatives from Moscow theatres offered their congratulations on the occasion of her jubilee. As she made her speech in reply which rang with a youthful and emotional ardour, electric bulbs formed above her grey head the bright figure "75" surrounded with laurel leaves. This symbolized a long life devoted to art.

### THEATRE ANNIVERSARIES

Theatres of two Russian cities—Stavropol in the Kuban and Voronezh in Central Russia—are preparing to celebrate their jubilees. Such famous actors as Nikolai Rybakov, Vassili Zhivokini, Modest Pissarev once acted on the stage of the Stavropol theatre. The city's archives for 1871—1872 preserve an extensive correspondence concerning the performance on the Stavropol stage of several plays forbidden by the censorship, including Leskov's play *The Squanderer*. The Stavropol theatre was one of the first to produce Maxim Gorky's plays. *The Philistines* appeared in this theatre in 1903, followed by *Lower Depths*.

During World War II when the theatre was obliged to abandon its native city—Stavropol was occupied by the Germans—



Varvara Ryzhova with her family

the actors performed for hospitals and for the troops. In 1943 they returned to Stavropol, to find their theatre building destroyed. But they were given other premises and soon the first play-bill appeared in the liberated city.

The theatre is celebrating its centenary with a production of the immortal comedy *Wit Works Woe* by Griboyedov.

Voronezh is to issue an almanac devoted to the jubilee of the city's theatre.

### RUSSIAN FAIRY TALES IN THE PUPPET THEATRE

Russian folklore with its fairy tales is a treasure-house for the Puppet Theatre. And where, indeed, can one show to better advantage the wonders abounding in each fairy tale?

The Moscow Puppet Theatre used for one of its latest productions an old Russian folk tale *Little Sister Alenushka and Little Brother Ivanushka*. A wonderful world of make-believe comes to life behind the puppet screen.

Two little orphans—Alenushka and Ivanushka—are wandering, forlorn, in a field. They meet with the hundred years' old Tsar Gwidon and his huntsmen. The kind old Tsar presents the children with a warm bear's skin. He has no idea how useful it will prove! In the forest the children come across an enchanted cabin: it is that very "little cabin standing on hen's legs", which is so often met with in Russian folk tales. The nasty old Baba-Yaga, a witch complete with broomstick, lives in that cabin. She wants to devour the children, but, hiding under the bear's skin, they save themselves. Then the cunning Baba-Yaga bewitches the water of the forest lake so that a mouthful from it changes Ivanushka into a little white goat. The kind Tsar takes Alenushka and her white goat into his castle, but the witch penetrates there too, and her poisonous breath makes the trees wither, and the flowers fade, and the castle's walls grow green with mould. The viles of Baba-Yaga are inexhaustible: poor little Alenushka is drowned in the sea. The witch, who impersonates Alenushka, settles in the castle to pursue the little goat—Ivanushka. She gets the Tsar's permission to boil him in a cauldron. And see, "the bon-fires burn bright, and cauldrons are full . . . aboiling . . ."

But the Tsar's huntsmen arrive just in time to save Alenushka from drowning, the treachery is exposed, the wicked witch's head is chopped off, and the little white goat—much to the joy of the tiny theatre-goers—once again becomes the little boy, Ivanushka.

The moral of the fairy tale—the age-long struggle between good and evil, the eternal truth and light emerging victorious over oppression and darkness—is truthfully and vividly revealed in the production.

### STAGE PRODUCTION OF "THE PEOPLE IS IMMORTAL"

A dramatized version of Vassili Grossman's *The People Is Immortal* (see *International Literature* No. 1, 1943) now running at the

Moscow Theatre of Drama and Comedy, was adapted for the stage by the playwright Ignat Nazarov. The leit-motif of the play is to show not only the heroism and endurance of the Russians, but to analyze the relations between the army personnel and the growing conviction of each soldier that the defeat of fascism and the victory of the Russian army, fighting for a just cause, were inevitable.

It is interesting that the part of the hero of the play, Commissar Bogarev, is taken by Yuri Kostrovskoy, who fought at Stalingrad and actually lived through the events portrayed on the stage—a factor which helps him to fathom the complex world of the character which he has to portray. . . .

The hero, Bogarev, a professor in peacetime, a thinker and peace-loving citizen to the marrow of his bones, finds himself at the front as a commissar of a combat unit. War conditions present new aims and new problems and develop new qualities in Bogarev. He becomes a capable officer and educator of his men, and the birth of these new qualities, which do not come easily to Bogarev, is very convincingly demonstrated in the performance. The temporary successes of the fascist army breed profound and heavy doubts within him. And when, at last, he arrives at the understanding of the temporary nature of the failures, Bogarev discovers correct methods of inculcating in his men a proper attitude towards fascism. He inspires them with an irrevocable faith in their strength and the final victory of the Red Army.

The devotion of Private Ignatyev, a courageous, handsome youth, to his commissar is very touching. The scene, when Ignatyev carries away the body of Bogarev, who has fallen in battle, is truly tragic. He's offered help, many friendly hands are stretched towards his heavy burden. But he answers: "I'll carry him myself," as if in solemn vow to bear honourably the burden of all the tribulations fallen to the Russian people. S. Bardin, in the role of Ignatyev, creates a highly pleasing character, combining daring with deep feeling.

Most dramatic are the scenes showing the bombing of an Ukrainian village, the flight of the civil population, the death of Ignatyev's bride, the death of Bogarev . . . But the Russians like to sing and to exchange a joke even in the most difficult times. The audience laughs merrily at the successful comic characters of the play: the cook, forever warbling a popular army song *The Little Blue Kerchief* and the young general's aide, Lyadov, who is so nervous at first by the vicinity of the front-line. With a brace of pistols in his belt, he reports to his general that the Germans have appeared two kilometres away. But the general, upon hearing his report, asks him to break a branch of hazel tree, picks off the nuts and cracks them with great gusto, commenting on their taste. Thus the general educates tenacity and reserve in his men. The part of Lyadov is excellently performed by a young actor G. Rokinson.

The play is produced by A. Plotnikov. Stage settings are by the Stalin Prize winner P. Sokolov-Skalya and by V. Panfilov.



The Theatre of Drama and Comedy is a young theatre, formed after victory and *The People Is Immortal* is its first production.

### DUMAS STAGED AT THE MOSCOW CHILDREN'S THEATRE

Paris is asleep... "All is quiet... Sle-e-e-p, Parisians," chants an old guardsman to the accompaniment of his mallet. Muffled in her cloak, Constance Bonacieux discloses to her admirer D'Artagnan the conspiracies against Queen Anne. This attractive lyrical scene opens the performance of *The Three Musketeers* at the Moscow Theatre for the Young Spectator.

Adapted for the stage by Stanislav Radzinsky, Dumas' novel enjoys a deserved success. The playwright has succeeded in bridging the gaps inevitable in plots based on novels, by letting his characters relate events occurring beyond the limits of the stage-setting. This, however, does not deprive the play of the tense action, so typical of Dumas' works.

The success of the performance is determined to an equal degree by the acting of the main roles. Nevskaya, one of the finest actresses of the theatre, is charming as Constance, actor N. Garin gives an excellent picture of the daring Gascon D'Artagnan.

The lyrical songs by the poet Mikhail Svetlov and incidental music by the composer Pakhmanov add greatly to the performance.

The young audience responded to the elevating ideas of honesty, friendship and devotion which run through the play and gave the actors an overwhelming ovation.

### ABASALOM AND ETERI REVIVED

*Abasalom and Eteri*, a Georgian opera, has been staged by the Bolshoi Theatre after a long interval. The Georgian composer Z. Paliashvili based this opera on a delightful folk legend about a true love that is stronger than death and which surmounts all suffering. A passionate enthusiast and an indefatigable collector and fine connoisseur of Georgian folk music, Zakhari Paliashvili studied in the Moscow Conservatory under the composer Sergei Taneyev (1856—1915). Although well acquainted with the technique of European composition, Paliashvili succeeded in recalling in his opera *Abasalom and Eteri*

the nature of Georgian music and poetry. This opera which resembles an ancient epic has a solemn majestic character. The spirit of the Georgian people, their vitality and chivalry are reflected in the choruses and mass folk scenes.

The creative co-operation of the conductor A. Melik-Pashayev, director R. Simonov and the stage designer V. Ryndin has resulted in producing a performance of high artistic value.

The authors of the text, studying the score, placed the scene of the opera in the 12th century—the "Golden Age of Rust'veli"—the age of the early Renaissance in Georgian culture. This is quite in keeping with the character of this opera-legend.

The general composition of the spectacle is monumental and kept within the solemn style of an oratorio. Stage settings and costumes are reminiscent of an ancient fresco. But the solemn stateliness of the epic tale reveals a tremendous clash of human passions. Elena Kruglikova in the role of Eteri and Nikandr Khanayev as Abasalom, convey this emotion with great earnestness and feeling.

### THE MAID OF ORLEANS

Chaikovsky's heroic historical opera *The Maid of Orleans* had its première in St. Petersburg in 1881. Chaikovsky started work on the opera soon after he had completed his *Eugene Onegin*. The composer was inspired by the romantic subject, by the profound human character of the "warrior maid" Joan of Arc and her noble exploit in saving her motherland.

Sixty-five years have elapsed since the première of *The Maid of Orleans*. It is now being revived in the theatre where it was first produced. This unjustly neglected creation of Chaikovsky met with a warm reception from the Leningrad audience.

The leit-motif of *The Maid of Orleans* is the people, whose daughter Joan of Arc was. Its basic theme is the struggle of the people against the foreign invader.

The production conveys the style of that period well portrayed by Chaikovsky's music with its clear lyricism and genuine emotions.

Ivan Dzerzhinsky, the composer of the opera



Scene from the play  
*The Three Musketeers*

And *Quiet Flows the Don*, writes from Leningrad: "The *Maid of Orleans* is worth staging only when there is a singer able to cope with Joan's part, which is extremely difficult. Such an artist is Sofia Preobrazhenskaya who creates a genuine image and possesses a voice of rare beauty and power."

According to the press, the conductor Boris Khaikin, the producer Ilya Shlepyanov and the stage designer Vladimir Dmitriev have created an impressive and vivid performance. They have recorded one of the most brilliant pages in the history of France through the medium of a Russian classical opera.

### THEATRE PRODUCTIONS

This is a lively season in Moscow's theatre-land. Billboard announcements contain new plays and present the names of classic and less mature playwrights.

The theatre directed by Yuri Zavadsky has produced the little-known comedy by Alexander Ostrovsky, *The Handsome Man*. This play, written in 1883, portrays the life of provincial nobles who have moved from their estates into the city in order to invest in some "business" or squander away their money.

The play centres around the life of a young woman who, deceived by a handsome appearance, marries an empty-headed, worthless fellow. The part is played by Olga Vikland with great feeling. The depth of human sentiments, the desire for purity of family life, for devotion and equality in love as expressed by her, won the admiration of the audience.

A Leningrad playwright Leonid Malyugin dedicated his play *Old Friends* to the youth in wartime. The play was produced by the Moscow Theatre, named after the famous dramatic actress Maria Yermolova.

Several Leningrad boys and girls, yesterday's schoolchildren, met together one lovely summer night of 1941. A happy future is before them, they make plans, they are merry, they are in love and none of them even suspects that next morning—June 22nd, 1941—the thunder of war will echo over the country.

Their young lives are swept into the whirlwind of events; different fates await them. A reunion takes place in the most difficult period of the siege of Leningrad. They are not all here; some are at the front, some have been evacuated to the interior. A third meeting takes place on the same date after victory. Having gone through the grim school of war, matured, seasoned, they meet as genuine "old friends", full of radiant hope for a happy future.

The youthful actors of the Yermolova theatre bring to the performance a creative inspiration, warm lyricism and a genuine happiness.

The Moscow Art Theatre has put on Oscar Wilde's comedy *The Ideal Husband*, newly translated into Russian by Vitali Vilenkin. It is staged by Victor Stanitsyn, the decor is by Ivan Gremislavsky. The leading actors are Angelina Stepanova, Olga Androvskaya, Olga Knipper-Chekhova, Pavel Massalsky, Vladimir Yershov and others.

Buffoonery, humorous songs, satire, melodrama without too much sentimentality—all these ingredients of an old-time vaudeville may be found in the new comedy *Fakir for*

*an Hour*, by the young authors Vladimir Dykhovichny and Moris Slobodskoy. It has been staged by the Moscow Theatre of Satire.

The theme is founded on a "classical" confusion. A writer staying in a provincial hotel is mistaken for a well-known doctor, a hypnotist. Various people coming into contact with the writer, listen to his advice and critical remarks. Thinking they are dealing with a real hypnotist they absorb everything as "influence under a hypnotic state", and painstakingly endeavour to carry out everything just as they were told. And since the writer's advice is clever and reasonable, the result is highly successful.

The leading thought of the play, concealed within the many amusing episodes is simple: every man can improve himself if he has the desire. The play as performed by the actors of the Theatre of Satire resounds with unrestrained merriment.

Most of the success is due to the popular actor Vladimir Khenkin who acts the part of a stammering liftman who is advised by the writer "hypnotist" to sing instead of speaking, and is thus cured of his stammering.

### THE ISADORA DUNCAN STUDIO

The Isadora Duncan Moscow studio was founded twenty years ago when the famous American dancer visited Soviet Russia. The studio has just completed a set of successful concerts in Moscow. During the twenty years of its existence the studio gave altogether about five thousand concerts, attended by four million people. It has toured many cities of the Soviet Union, and has visited France, China, U.S.A. and Canada.

The little girls who started in 1921 at the age of from four to ten, have now become experienced dancers. Their program partly consists of dances, composed by Isadora Duncan twenty years ago; such are fragments from *Orpheus*, *Iphigenia in Aulis*, *Iphigenia in Tauris* by Gluck, *Butterfly* to Chopin's music, the Irish jig, and a choreographic composition to the song of the Volga boatmen . . . .

One of the young Soviet choreographers V. Burmeister has been taking part in the work of the Studio, and composed some of the new dances which enriched the program. Among the compositions of recent years are such dances as *Courage* to the music by Anatoli Alexandrov, *The Oath* to the music of three of Scriabin's preludes, Chopin's *Polonaise*, etc.

Constantine Stanislavsky, founder of the Moscow Art Theatre, paid tribute to Isadora Duncan's talent in his book *My Life in Art*, and, speaking of her as of an "honorable guest" of the Art Theatre, observed, that the Art Theatre and Duncan are united by one and the same thing: a search for new creative principles in art.

### CINEMA

#### THREE SEA FILMS

Three films, dealing with life at sea were released almost simultaneously on the Soviet screen.

*Admiral Nakhimov*, released by the Mosfilm studios, is dedicated to one of the best pages



in the history of the Russian navy, connected with the defense of Sevastopol in 1854. The film was directed by Vsevolod Pudovkin, who won world recognition by his films *Mother* after Maxim Gorky's book, and *Storm Over Asia*. The scenario of the film *Admiral Nakhimov* was written by the playwright Igor Lukovsky.

Nakhimov is the central character, around which centres the entire action of the film, revealing the strategic talent, heroism and human qualities of this renowned admiral.

The battle scenes with the Turks at Synop and the heroic defense of Sevastopol are excellently portrayed in the film. But the utmost expression and effect is achieved in the technically difficult scene of a storm at sea. The use of both artificial and natural shots creates an impressive picture of the grandeur of the elements.

The well-known actor Alexei Diky has succeeded in reconstructing not only the outward likeness, but the rich inner content of the admiral's character.

Vladimir Braun is known among his studio colleagues as the "sea director". Braun indeed knows the sea and loves it. His new film *On a Long Cruise*, produced by the Kiev studios, is also one of a series of "sea films". This boys' story is based on short stories and novels by Stanyukovich, a well-known Russian writer of the 19th century.

The film describes the navy of old Russia, Russian seamen and officers. The youthful audience is carried away by the romance of the voyage. The boys feel the urge to become sailors, to experience the thrill of battling against the elements.

The part of an old boatswain, the principal character of the film, is excellently acted by A. Buchma of the Kiev Drama Theatre. His portrayal is a colourful and vivid character of a Russian sailor. M. Komonov gives a very good performance as Senior Officer Berg.

### *The Fifteen-Year-Old Captain*

Beginning with the opening shots of a storm at sea, this new film breathes the tang of the ocean, and one almost feels the salt spray splashing into one's face right off the

screen. *The Fifteen-Year-Old Captain*, produced by the Soviet children's studio *Soyuzdetfilm*, follows closely Jules Verne's book of the same title.

Captain Hull, an old sea-dog, compels the admiration of the audience as he sets out in his whaling vessel on a dangerous voyage. The characters are perfectly portrayed by the actors who seem to have been very wisely chosen by the director Vassili Zhuravlev. Captain Hull has unexpected passengers—Mrs. Weldon, wife of one of the partners of the whaling firm, en route to America with her son and his Negro nurse, and her cousin, an absent-minded professor of entomology. Even the presence of Mrs. Weldon, played by actress Elizabeth Izmailova, charming in her bustle dress, and her little son Jack, performed with confidence by six-year-old Azarik Messerer, scion of the ballet, theatre and film family of Messerers, does not make captain Hull forget altogether that all the barrels in the hold of the whaler are empty. When his sailors at last sight a whale, the captain gives chase in a small boat, leaving the ship's-boy Dick Sand in charge. Hull fails to return. In a raging storm Dick Sand steers the ship on her course. His captain taught him how to handle the compass. But the villain Negoro, posing as ship's cook, breaks the extra compass, places a pick-axe under the compass on the captain's deck, which interferes with the ship's course, and secretly directs the vessel towards his own destination to Angola, the African paradise for pirates and slave-dealers.

In Africa Dick Sand and his charges meet with a new set of adventures. Mrs. Weldon, her son and the professor are kidnapped and held by the pirates, while Dick is tied up and prepared for sacrifice to the stone god at whose feet he is thrust. Courage never fails him, and he is ready to meet death as bravely as it befits a true captain, but he is saved by the Negro Hercules, devoted to the young captain who rescued him from a wrecked ship, abandoned by slave-dealers. The part of Hercules, one of the principal characters in the film, is performed by Wayland Rudd, an American Negro actor, living in the U.S.S.R. Besides good acting, Rudd sing



*Still from the film The Fifteen-Year-Old Captain*

and dances a real barn dance to a primitive jazz band. His partner, the mammy, is also a Negro actress Koretti Arle-Tiez who has been singing Negro spirituals in Soviet concert halls for the last twenty years, and sings a lullaby in the film.

One of the best parts of the film, having an independent artistic and instructive value, is the Negro totem dance, performed by the tribe before the sacrifice of Dick Sand. Hercules, wearing a terrifying mask and a straw skirt, hides among the dancers and, leading them with a song, cuts the ropes holding Dick Sand. Wayland Rudd is at his best here.

After a thrilling escape the party fall in with Captain Hull who was saved at sea by a British frigate and comes to Angola just in time to shoot the villain who is wrestling with Dick. The part of Negoro, alias the pirate captain Louis Ferreira, is excellently portrayed by Mikhail Astangov, of the Vakh-tangov Theatre, who has appeared in the films *Kotovsky* and *The Oppenheim Family*.

The part of the boy captain is acted by Volodya Larionov, a pupil of one of the Moscow schools. Possessing a natural gift of expression and a very pleasing, clear-cut face, the young actor does very well with the help of the director's skillful guidance. The young spectators admire and want to copy this brave young sailor, always doing his duty.

The film is not only exciting but instructive, serving as a source of useful knowledge in geography and natural history. The professor, acted by a talented actor P. Sukhanov, supplies information on entomology and is the first to discover that the party is stranded not in Bolivia, as told by the pirates, but in Africa.

The "Metropole", one of Moscow's principal theatres, has a fine tradition of having its audiences meet the principal actors of films shown by the house.

In the same manner Georgi Grebner, author of the script, cameraman Yuri Fogelman and actors Volodya Larionov, Azarik Messerer, Elizaveta Izmailova and Wayland Rudd told the juvenile spectators about their work on the film and disclosed some of the scene shooting secrets.

### WHITE FANG

The mountains and forests of Altai, their rapid rivers bordered by steep banks and green meadows, form the background for the new Soviet film *White Fang* after Jack London's well-known story.

The cinema company had to take along with them quadruped actors—two tiny wolves, ten adult ones and for the last part of the film, when the he-wolf gets used to man—a wolf-hound. This wolf-hound so closely resembled a wolf, that even the veteran hunters of Altai did not believe they saw a harmless trained dog.

One of the little wolves was particularly amusing during the shooting of the film in the "taiga". He was quite tiny when removed from his mother, and in the film had to meet other animals and birds for the first time. On one occasion a huge raven was enticed by a piece of raw meat to an open space in the

forest. When the raven alighted, the wolf cub was released from behind the trees. Squinting at the dreadful bird, with ears flat against his head, the young wolf started creeping towards the meat. He snatched a piece and ran. But the meat tasted so good, that a little later he came back for more. This time, however, the raven was on the alert. As soon as he saw the approaching wolf, he started advancing, raising his strong beak. The wolf cub began to retreat carefully, and at last ran for life to the amusement of the people watching the scene from a distance.

Soon the little wolf made friends with a suckling fawn. They had a good look at each other, and then snuggled down together in the most peaceful manner, as if inviting the cameraman to take a shot.

According to the script, "White Fang's" mother engages in a fight with a lynx. Both the wolf and the lynx are ferocious, but extremely cautious animals. It was decided to let the lynx straight into the wolf's lair, so that the wolf, defending his dwelling, would throw himself on the lynx. The cave in the mountains was fenced off with metal netting and an old wolf left there for a few days. After the wolf had got used to his den, the lynx was admitted. The wolf's hair bristled, and he immediately attacked the intruder. The animals fought viciously, rolled over on the ground. But soon the wolf conquered and the dead lynx remained immobile on the scene of the fight.

The menagerie of the travelling film company had yet another lynx—a remarkably handsome, fluffy red-haired beast. It was a pity to pit her against an old cunning wolf, so the latter was replaced by another, younger animal. This wolf got scared at the sight of the lynx, and hid in the corner. There was nothing for it but to let the old wolf, a brave warrior, into the lair again. He made straight for the lynx. . . And again the cameramen shot a very interesting scene. This time the lynx appeared to be stronger and more courageous. When the wolf tried to snap at her, the red-haired beauty stood on her hind legs and retaliated with a smashing box on the ear. These followed one after another, with lightning speed. The wolf, unable to withstand the onslaught, fell. Without even condescending as much as a look at her stricken enemy, the lynx stepped aside and started calmly washing her face.

The shooting of the *White Fang* was extremely interesting for a student of nature.

### THE SONG OF VARIAG

Over forty years ago, in the far-distant port of Chemulpo in Korea, the Russian cruiser "Variag" and the gun-boat "Koreets" accepted an unequal battle with a strong Japanese naval squadron.

This action began at eight a.m. on January 27th, 1904, when without any declaration of war, fourteen Japanese warships, having barred the exit from the bay, suggested to the senior officer on the "Variag", Captain Vsevolod Rudnev and the captain of the "Koreets" that they should surrender to the mercy of the victors; otherwise the Japanese Admiral



ru threatened to attack the Russian ships at once. The Japanese were sure that the Russian sailors would surrender without battle. Scorning surrender, the captain of the "Variag" decided to attack the enemy first. The Russian ships fearlessly cut across the enemies' course, arousing the admiration of British, French and American sailors then stationed at Chemulpo.

Captain Rudnev ordered fire at the Japanese flagship, and, turning to his officers, said: "This is our last parade. Forward!" The guns of the "Variag" damaged the Japanese flagship "Azama". One of the Japanese destroyers was sunk, later the Japanese cruiser "Takachikho" also sank. When the "Variag" was no longer able to continue the action because of serious damage, the Russian sailors blew up the gun-boat and scuttled the "Variag". Those of the heroes who remained alive were picked up by foreign vessels. This heroic deed of Russian sailors has served as the theme for a new film *The Song of the Variag*, script by Georgi Grebner.

The director of the film, Victor Eisymont, author of the popular films *Battle Friends* and *Once There Was a Little Girl*, said: "We want the film to be a song, a ballad. Its title determines the style to a certain extent. We are not aiming so much at transferring to the screen an exact replica of the events, but to give the audience a vivid idea about the heroism of the Russian people, the courage of the "Variag" sailors, their great moral strength and nobleness of mind. . . ." The scenes are being shot aboard ships similar in type to those of that period. Modern ships have to be reconstructed for the purpose. The studio has collected rare photographs and drawings of the crews of the "Variag" and "Koreets", and other valuable historical material and documents.

## THE ELEPHANT AND THE SKIPPING-ROPE

A film by children and for children is being shown on the Moscow screens. The subject of the film *The Elephant and the Skipping-Rope* is very simple. A little girl, Lidochka, wants more than anything to learn how to skip well; she can't master this difficult sport and the other girls tease her. She dreams she goes to the Zoo to ask advice from the elephant. He says it is all very simple: you've got to try a good deal! Lidochka tries hard to carry out the elephant's advice, so hard indeed that her ardour creates many amusing misunderstandings and in the end makes her everybody's darling.

The script is by poetess Agnia Barto, one who knows the child's mind so well. The film speaks to the children in their own language, leading them into a familiar world of noisy games and frolics.

The part of Lidochka is taken by a seven-year-old girl Natasha Zashchipina. She is a veteran actress who has already starred in one film, the popular *Once There Was a Little Girl*. In this film she created a touching portrait of a tiny inhabitant of Leningrad during the siege. Natasha is musical, rhythmic and possesses the gift of histrionic expression. But the shooting of the new film had to

be stopped for a while; the young actress was shedding teeth!

Other children, little Lidochka's friends, also appear in this film; they please by their artlessness and lack of anything artificial; though they were acting they still remained merry little children.

The film *The Elephant and the Skipping-Rope* is the first independent work of a young director Ilya Frez. Lev Schwarz has composed melodies which haunt the memory and are in harmony with the light and merry songs by Agnia Barto.

The film is having a big success with children.

## ARTS

### EXHIBITION OF PAINTINGS BY SERGEI GERASSIMOV

Forty years of professional work and sixty years of life were marked by an exhibition of paintings by Sergei Gerassimov recently held in Moscow.

Sergei Gerassimov is known as a realistic painter. His canvases are imbued with life and optimism, while his style is broad and unrestrained.

Gerassimov's favourite theme is peasant life and Russian landscape. But a comparison of his early picture *The Soldier* (1925) with *The Collective Farm Coachman* (1934) shows a more profound interpretation by Gerassimov of Russian village types, and at the same time a greater skill of his brush. Collective farm life is also the theme of his *The Kolchhoz Holiday* finished in 1936. The impression of abundance and the joy of living created by the picture, is further enhanced by its clear, light tones.

In his painting *A Partisan Mother* (1943) Gerassimov has given us a beautiful and heroic type of Russian peasant woman.

The painter dedicated many of his wartime canvases to ancient Novgorod, devastated by the Germans. His Novgorod landscapes of 1944 are among the highlights of the exhibition. . . The crenellated walls and turrets of the ancient Russian city, majestic even in its ruins, proudly rise beyond the blue ribbon of the river Volkhov. Novgorod's hoary Kremlin, empty, overgrown with grass, still emanates the powerful breath of history.

But Gerassimov is a fine interpreter not only of the central-Russian landscapes, but also those of the Caucasus and Central Asia.

Particularly noteworthy are his travel water-colours—*Moscow to Samarkand* and *Samarkand to Moscow*. These landscapes unfold one by one, as the artist saw them from the window of his railway carriage.

Gerassimov works in yet one more field—he is not only a prominent painter, but a gifted illustrator. His drawings for Maxim Gorky's novel *The Artamonov Case* (1938) are particularly impressive.

His last work—a large historical canvas is shown for the first time at this exhibition. It is *The Pugachev Uprising*. Its composition is original, the variety of folk types is overwhelming. This last full-scale creation of the artist is an evidence, that at sixty, and in the fortieth year of his work Sergei Gerassimov's talent shines as brightly as ever.



## MUSEUM OF THE SCULPTOR GOLUBKINA

After an interval of four years the museum of the famous woman-sculptor Anna Golubkina (1864—1927) is again open in Moscow in the same house where Golubkina lived and worked. Together with her well-known creations there are some unfinished statues, a large box of clay, some tools—all of which adds to the creative atmosphere.

The visitor is able to see Golubkina's bronze statues. Leo Tolstoy sitting in an arm-chair is brilliantly expressive, and among the best portraits of the great writer who was Golubkina's contemporary.

### IN THE STUDIOS *A Visit to Sergei Konenkov* (By our photo-correspondent)

The well-known Russian sculptor Sergei Konenkov has returned to Moscow after a long sojourn in the United States.

Konenkov lost no time in making one of the rooms of his suite in the hotel "Moskva" into a studio, and in getting down to work. When I called on him, I was received by his wife, Margarita Ivanovna, who, having caught my disappointed expression, smiled, and said that the sculptor would be out of his studio any minute. "He's expecting you," she added, and Konenkov flung the curtain open with a quick sweep of his hand.

Apparently he hated tearing himself away from work, but, obeying his wife's signal who nodded in the direction of the camera he gave in and obediently arranged his hair.

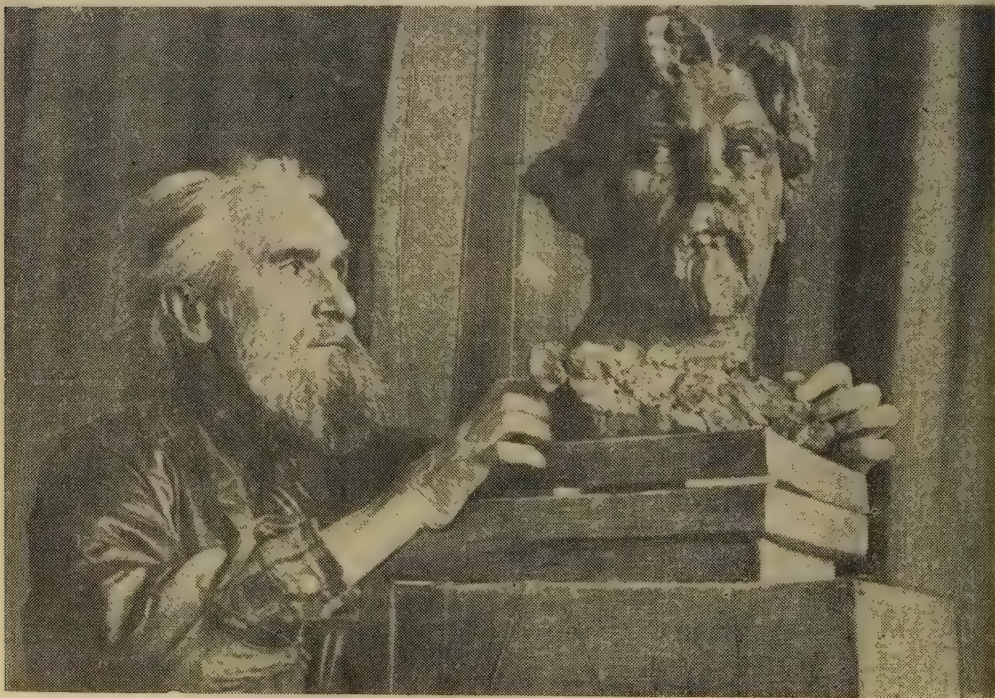
We started the usual conversation: "How did you travel?" "Has Moscow changed much?" Konenkov has not been in Moscow for twenty-two years. Certainly many changes have taken place in Moscow, but Moscovites haven't forgotten him. He was warmly received by his Moscow colleagues, he met many of his old friends, and now he is gradually becoming acquainted with the artistic life of the capital.

We touched upon the Art Exhibition of the U.S.S.R., but Konenkov refrained from expressing any opinions. "The exhibition is too spacious to allow one to give an opinion straight away," he said, "and moreover when I first visited the Tretyakov Gallery my eyes ran amok, I wanted to have a look at the old masters, but got stuck in Vrubel's room."

We started recalling Konenkov's old works exhibited in the Tretyakov Gallery and other museums of the U.S.S.R.: *Stribog* (The Heathen God), *The Little Old Fairy Elf*, and, of course, his *Paganini*, the sculpture which brought him world fame.

"And do you remember *Samson, Bursting his Chains*?" asked Konenkov, and told of his work on the sculpture in 1903, about his desire to breathe a revolutionary significance into the statue—the idea of the revolutionary urge of the people, trying to break the chains that bound them. "I did not succeed then," he said, lost in thought, "that happened later. . . ."

In 1918 Konenkov, at the request of Lenin whom he knew personally, made a memorial bas-relief *To Those who Fell for the Peace and Fraternity of the People*, to be placed on



*The sculptor Sergei Konenkov at work*





*The sculptor Sergei Konenkov with his wife*

the Kremlin wall for the first anniversary of the October Revolution.

Konenkov started at the same time a sculpture *Lenin*, which he finished later in America.

During his years abroad Konenkov worked at his favourite themes of ancient Slav legends, and also created many sculptural portraits of writers, musicians and people prominent in culture and science. During the war Konenkov sculptured portraits in wood of Stalin, Molotov and several Marshals of the Soviet Union. He is now working on a monument to the Russian painter Surikov.

I asked for permission to view this, and immediately met with a decisive refusal. Konenkov never permits anyone to see an unfinished work.

"But I would like to take a photo of your work. . . ."

Konenkov surrendered, and donned a green padded blouse, his hair became dishevelled as if by magic, and the same vigilant glow, which surprised me when he came out of his studio, appeared in his eyes.

Of course it is difficult to work without a real studio, but he can't lose time. He had already examined many premises, but was unable to make a selection. "I don't need a huge mansion," he said. "What would I do in it?" — and his wife laughingly remarked about a visit of an unknown admirer of his talent, who proposed to construct right away an unusual studio specially for Konenkov. But the sculptor has his eye already on premises in the centre of the city, where later he will be able to exhibit his statues, when they arrive from America.

"I knew that I should return home sooner or later," he said, "and I did not want to return empty-handed."

Konenkov has brought to the U.S.S.R. about one hundred sculptures, which, he considers, include his best creations.

After completing the model for the Surikov monument, Konenkov hopes to start on the statue *Samson Bursts his Chains*, conceived long ago as a sequel to his first Samson. He has been working on sketches for this work for over ten years.

I felt his thoughts were once more on his work, and knew it was time to leave.

"But we will be seeing you again soon," said his wife, seeing me off. "You'll surely come to our new home, when Sergei Timofeevich's American sculptures arrive. We hear they are already in Murmansk."

#### AT FYODOR BOGORODSKY'S

Thirty years ago the public attending an exhibition in Nizhni-Novgorod (now Gorky) were attracted by paintings by Fyodor Bogorodsky, a young artist, and then a pilot in the Air Force.

Bogorodsky started his career as a painter in 1916. All his vast experience, for his life was rich in events and adventures, are reflected in his work. During the Civil War years Bogorodsky fought in the Volga Flotilla and took part in the defense of Tsaritsyn. (now Stalingrad). Many of his paintings reflect that heroic period. His canvases, dedicated to the revolutionary seamen are painted with affection; these include: *Sailors in Ambush*, *Father and Son*, *Sailor*, *Music*.

There are about 160 paintings of Bogorodsky's in Soviet art galleries. Lovers of painting remember his seascapes, his warm Volga sketches, Moscow streets, types of Donbas miners and workers of the Sormovo plant. In 1929, Bogorodsky spent six months in Sorrento with Maxim Gorky. Besides a series of Italian landscapes, he painted several pictures devoted to Gorky: *Gorky's Favourite Haunts in Sorrento*, *The House Where Gorky Lived*, *Nature-Morte of Gorky's Favourite Things*.

In 1942, at the height of the great battle, Bogorodsky went to Stalingrad. He spent two and a half months with the army commanded by General Chuikov, who had charge of the defense of the city. His travel album was filled with episodes of the titanic battle for the city.

From the banks of the Volga Bogorodsky went to the besieged Leningrad, to the ships of the Baltic fleet. He brought numerous sketches and drawings from that trip.

Bogorodsky's latest work is a large canvas, *Glory to the Fallen*. A mother is bending over the dead body of her son; an officer kneels before a fallen comrade; in the background there are two severe figures of soldiers. . . .



The artist spent two years on this impressive painting.

#### AT DMITRI SHMARINOV'S

Dmitri Shmarinov, Stalin Prize winner and widely known as a book illustrator, became famous during the war for his series in black and white *We Shan't Forget or Forgive*, a silent indictment of the Germans for their crimes in the occupied territories. Book illustration is not the only genre in which Shmarinov works. He is also a painter and poster designer. At present he is working on a large canvas which he calls *The Spring of 1943*... Early spring... nature is awakening after a long winter's slumber, the snow is melting, and the fields are a mass of tiny rivulets. Birds are flying overhead. The men are resting after battle-fighting for a Russian village. And here it is—the longed-for reunion. A soldier meets his wife and takes his son in his arms.

In the artist's studio we saw small drawings in glass frames. This is a series of illustrations for the 3rd volume of Alexei Tolstoy's *Peter I*, just completed by Shmarinov. Twelve drawings deal with different periods in Peter's civil and military activity. Shmarinov is also working at illustrations for Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace* and a volume of poems by Nikolai Nekrasov. He is also author of illustrations in colour for poems by Pushkin. One of his best works are illustrations for Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment*. Portraits of heroes and drawings of Petersburg streets, houses and courtyards convey the atmosphere of the novel.

Shmarinov illustrated many important books of Russian literature: Gorky's novels and plays—*The Life of Matvei Kozhemyakin*, *Lower Depths*, *The Enemies*, *The Artamonov Case*; Sholokhov's novel *Virgin Soil Upturn-*

*ed* and Fyodor Panfyorov's novel *Bruski*. Shmarinov, who is now in his thirties, started twenty years ago as an illustrator of children's books.

#### AT SCULPTOR SERGEI ORLOV'S

What is the classical material for monumental sculpture? The history of art answers this question: plaster of Paris, bronze, wood, marble. But porcelain and faience—they usually serve for small "chamber" creations.

The work of sculptor Sergei Orlov challenges this tradition. Before us is a half-a-meter composition in colour *Alexander Nevsky*. The warrior's powerful figure is enhanced by a fairy-tale background. At his feet lies a fallen Livonian knight. This sculpture is both impressive and decorative. The turquoise blue wood, the golden earth, the Livonian's black cloak and Nevsky's coat of mail sparkle with various shades of colour, and all this large group is done in porcelain. . . .

The creation of a statue in porcelain is a complicated and detailed work. The sculptor must first model the statue in clay or wax. Then a creamy porcelain mixture is poured into the cast. This cast, while absorbing the moisture, has the property of attracting simultaneously parts of the porcelain mixture to its walls. Thus a layer of porcelain is formed, which is an exact copy of the model. After many other technical stages, such as drying and fixing, the sculpture is painted.

Orlov who is greatly attracted by Russian fairy tales exhibited at the Art Exhibition of the U.S.S.R. sculptures on fairy-tale subjects: *The Hunch-Back Horse* and *The Fisherman and the Little Fish*. Very effective is his colourful composition *Fairy Tales* which displays many characters from popular Russian folk tales.

The sculptor is also interested in the heroes



Diorama: The Heroic Defense of Stalingrad



of Russian epic ballads, like the giant Mikula Selyaninovich. Many of the sketches in his studio are devoted to this subject.

### THE MUSEUM OF RUSSIAN ARCHITECTURE

A new museum is being organized in Moscow—the Museum of Russian Architecture. It is located in a huge ancient mansion, constructed by the prominent Russian architect Matvei Kazakov (1733—1812).

The various branches of the museum will demonstrate the development of Russian building over the last five centuries. A special section will be devoted to Soviet architecture and municipal construction. The museum will exhibit in its halls models of ancient architectural relics of Moscow and the Moscow Kremlin, Novgorod, Pskov, Leningrad, also sketches, drafts, and plans by famous Russian architects such as Kazakov, Bazhenov, Voronikhin, Zakharov, Starov. There will be paintings and dioramas, giving an idea of what Russian cities once looked like.

A collection of books and manuscripts on the history of Russian architecture will be attached to the museum.

### THE LENIN ALBUM

An album of sketches by artist Pavel Vasiliyev, devoted to V. I. Lenin has been published in Moscow. The *Lenin* album consists of 17 sketches, showing different episodes in the life of the founder of the Soviet state. The drawings are intended for exhibition in clubs, schools and cultural centres.

### DIORAMA OF STALINGRAD

A new diorama *The Heroic Defense of Stalingrad* is on show in the foyer of the Central Theatre of the Red Army. The diorama records the decisive battle on the Mamayev

Hill, when Red Army units which broke through to join the Stalingrad defenders, destroyed the remnants of SS. troops. Eventually this diorama will be housed in a special building on the Mamayev Hill in Stalingrad.

### RADIO

A new radio feature for children has brought a lot of pleasure to the young listeners. The Moscow radio gives several daily broadcasts for children, and authors of the radio studio are constantly seeking new forms of contact between themselves and their millions of young listeners. 1946 brought many such novelties.

One of the most successful is the series on popular science titled *The Club of Famous Captains*. The members of this club are known to children throughout the world. They are the heroes of favourite children's books—Robinson Crusoe, Gulliver, Captain Nemo, Captain Hatteras and Tartarin of Tarascon. On New Year's Eve they abandoned their canvas bindings, descended for the first time from the library shelves and had a friendly reunion under the Christmas tree. They liked the talk so much, that they decided from now on to meet every month, and organized a "Club of Famous Captains".

It is really a geographical club, which tells its radio-audience, in the form of lively dialogue a great deal about the various countries of the world. Each of the captains speaks in his own literary style and maintains his particular character.

Baron Münchhausen, an adventurer and unrestrained liar, tries to break in on these romantic reunions. He tries hard to be accepted as a member of the Club of Famous Captains, but fails, because the captains hate liars. Indeed, there is not a word of invention



in all their unusual stories. For instance, listeners are given a description of how a Soviet Polar pilot Mavriki Slepnev "flew into yesterday. . . ." "That never happened even to me!" exclaims Münchhausen annoyed. But in fact Mavriki Slepnev, having flown across the Bering Straits to America, indeed found himself in "yesterday", because in that part of the world, between the islands of Big and Little Diomedea there is an imaginary line, determining the beginning of the day on the earth.

What other stories are told to the children by the "Club of famous Captains"?

. . . The dead city of Hara-Hote. . . Once upon a time in the Gobi desert there was a rich and powerful city. . . Nothing but legends remained of it. But an intrepid Russian traveller, Pyotr Kozlov, followed the traces of these legends, and after untold difficulties succeeded in discovering the ruins of the legendary city.

. . . In the Caucasus, in Georgia, there is still in existence a cave city—the castle of Tsarina Tamara, sung by the poet Mikhail Lermontov. This castle, consisting of three hundred sixty-five caves dug in the mountains and connected by staircases and subterranean passages, was impregnable to the enemy.

The authors of the scripts for these broadcasts are Vladimir Kreps and Clementi Minz. Their work is directed by Vladimir Shneiderov, author of many popular adventure films. The composer Georgi Kretner uses many English folk melodies for his music accompanying the broadcast. Famous artists such as Vassili Kachalov, Mikhail Narokov, Ossip Abdulov take part in the broadcasts.

Listeners have expressed unanimous approval of the new broadcasts of the Radio Committee. The "Famous Captains' Club" receives a daily budget of letters from all parts of the country.

The captains' talks are cut short each time by the morning crowing of a cock. Many schoolchildren beg in their letters: "Couldn't the cock crow a little later?" They want as much time as possible with their favourite literary heroes, who tell them so many new and interesting things.

Another radio surprise for Soviet children is a new monthly radio magazine *The Invisible*. Although invisible to the audience the editor of this literary magazine is very well known to the children of Soviet country. It is Lev Kassil, one of the most popular children's writers.

The broadcasts of each number of this magazine are arranged in the form of an editorial meeting at the microphone. The audience, together with editors, look through manuscripts before sending them to the printshop.

The magazine has various sections. There are short stories, translations from the poets of the national republics of the Soviet Union, a comic page and information about the activities of various children's authors. A special permanent section of the magazine is devoted to Alexander Pushkin, who, as the editor of this section stated in the first number of the magazine, "is loved as the dearest of friends."

The audience of the invisible magazine has already listened to many very interesting pages of Russian and foreign literature.

In April, 1947, the Soviet Union will celebrate the eight hundredth anniversary of the Russian capital, Moscow. Scientific institutions, museums, publishing houses are all preparing for this event.

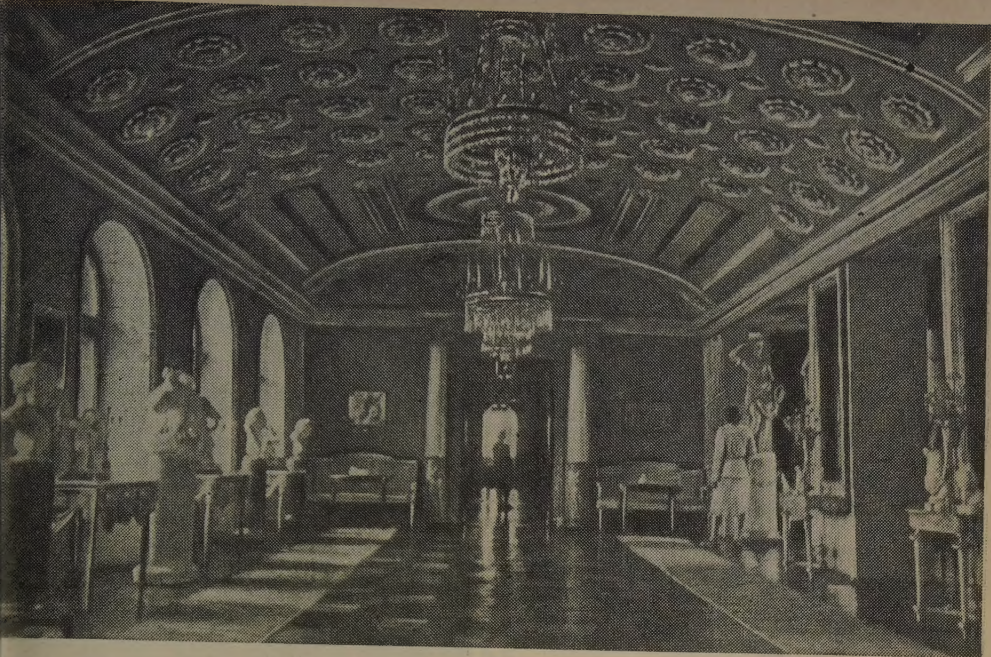
The Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. is issuing a many-volumed treatise on the history of Moscow, compiled by a group of scientists. This group is headed by Professors S. V. Bakhrushin, A. M. Pankratova and Doctor of Historical Sciences N. M. Druzhinin. The first volume has already been completed. Its material gives an idea, how Moscow, from a small town, became the centre of the Russian state, a huge metropolis. The authors used many documents previously unknown. They studied the archives, dealing with the changes occurring in the appearance of the city during the 16th, 17th and the 18th centuries, and with the history of Moscow architecture and Moscow art.

Books kept by Russian monasteries permit the study of Moscow's leading role in the economics of the country during the 16th century, and give an idea of the commercial contacts of Moscow. They also give detailed information about the time when the White City (the ring of fortress walls around ancient Moscow) was built, and when streets were first paved with logs of wood. Other documents give details of the life in the houses of the boyars and in the monasteries. The interior of various types of houses is described, beginning with the primitive smoky huts and ending with the mansions of the rich boyars. The literary, scientific and social life of Moscow of the 16th century is also shown in detail.



*Ostankino Museum*





all in the Ostankino Museum

### PALACE-MUSEUM NEAR MOSCOW

The Ostankino Palace—a museum of the life of the Russian serfs, has been re-opened after capital repairs, in Ostankino, a suburb of Moscow. This palace, together with the theatre which has remained intact, was built in the 18th century. It belonged to the Count Nikolai Sheremetyev, grandson of the collaborator of Peter the Great, Fieldmarshal Boris Sheremetyev. The Ostankino Palace was erected by serf craftsmen, among whom were many brilliant self-taught artists—architects, sculptors, painters. Not only those who built the theatre, but also all the singers, actors and musicians were serfs.

The serf theatre occupies a central position in the palace, its hall served at the same time as a dancing floor. Stage-settings by the famous Gonzago are still preserved in the theatre. The best actress of the theatre was a serf-girl, a smith's daughter, Parasha Semchugova, who later became Count Sheremetyev's wife.

At the end of the 17th century Ostankino was surrounded by dense forest. In the book *Ancient Moscow*, published over half a century ago, it is related that when Paul I visited Ostankino, Count Sheremetyev prepared a "surprise" for him: when Paul was passing through the forest, which obscured his view of Ostankino, the trees fell suddenly, as if at the order of a magic wand, and the lovely panorama of the palace became visible. It appeared that the trees were sawed through beforehand, and at a given signal a serf, standing at each tree, gave it the final push.

Ostankino occupies a prominent place in the history of the Russian serf theatre both in its varied repertoire and brilliancy of staging, for which Count Sheremetyev never grudged money.

Now a museum, the Ostankino Palace is of great interest alike to specialists and to the general public. During the German air-raids in 1941, several bombs fell on the territory of the palace-museum, damaging the building. Now, after careful study the facade of the palace and its entire interior decoration have been completely restored.

### ARCHITECTS AT WORK

The reading-room attached to the library in the Academy of Architecture of the U.S.S.R. resembles a workshop, in which architects and artists perfect their profession. A young professor's assistant, arming himself with a pencil and compass, copies the facade of an old building from the book *Collection of Facades in the Cities of the Russian Empire*. A student of ceramics carefully copies in water-colours the design of an ancient Greek vase. A woman artist sketches the pattern on Persian rugs from a rare edition on Oriental art.

Books on architecture, the history and theory of art, and the technique of building, altogether more than eighty thousand titles, are collected on the library's shelves. Its antique treasures include about 1,600 rare and unique editions which first appeared during the early Renaissance period.

One finds here authentic engravings by Piranesi, the famous Italian engraver, author of architectural landscapes; rare editions of the most prominent theoreticians of classical architecture Palladio and Serlio published in the 16th century; the works of Vitruvius, published in 1681.

The library preserves excellent collections of old Russian etchings, original drawings by Gylliardi, Benois and Sokolov, old architects' albums, with hand-drawings in water-colours and Indian ink. Among the rarities is a unique edition of hand-painted designs.



by the architect Rusk who worked in Petersburg at the beginning of the 19th century.

The library's collections are constantly being replenished. During the past year alone about five thousand new books were purchased.

Members of the Academy of Architecture, scientists, architects living in Moscow, or visiting the capital, builders and students—all visit this library. Here, too, come people of mixed professions. The film director, Grigori Alexandrov, known for his films *Happy Fellows*, *The Circus*, *Volga-Volga*, needs material on interior decoration for his new film. A stage designer Yakov Stoffer examines editions on Oriental art. Soon afterwards the subjects, designs, and ornamentation, which Stoffer found in the library, and creatively embodied, came to life and sparkled with a variety of colour in the Oriental tale about the merry trickster Hoja-Nassreddin, hero of Oriental legends.

At present the scientific staff of the library is working on a special bibliography on the history of Moscow architecture, in preparation for the eight hundredth anniversary of Moscow, which falls in April, 1947. The history of the city and its architecture is richly represented in the library.

Theatre connoisseurs examine with interest a rare edition of Medox, a proprietor of a Moscow theatre—*Plans and Facades of the Theatre and Fancy-Dress Ballroom in Moscow*, published in 1797. Of no small interest is a collection of old engravings, published in Paris shortly before the French Revolution, and entirely devoted to the architecture of *A Pleasure House Named After the Village Kuskovo*. This refers to the estate of the Count Sheremetyev near Moscow, famed for luxurious celebrations and the brilliancy of the serf theatre.

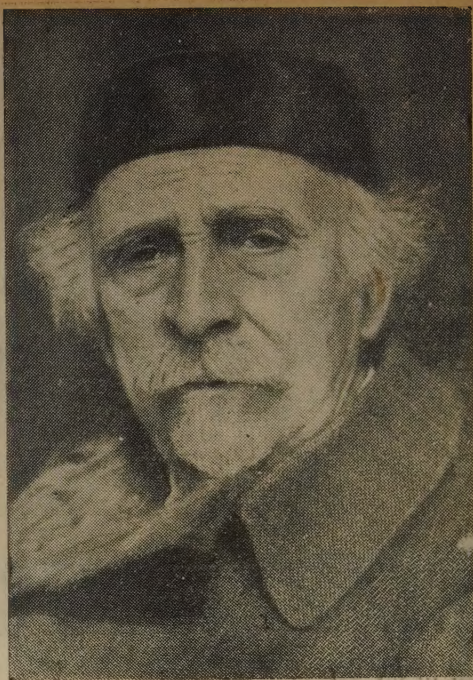
The numerous ancient plans of Moscow include one, "made under the supervision of Architect Ivan Michurin in 1793."

#### A VETERAN CHEMIST

Nikolai Zelinsky who recently celebrated his eighty-fifth birthday, is the Soviet Union's oldest chemist. Still full of energy, he spends most of his time in his quiet laboratory furnished with long tables chock-a-block with chemical retorts and paraphernalia. The windows of this laboratory overlook the building of the Moscow University.

The venerable scientist is a slight man with a piercing glance; snow-white hair falls from under his black silk skull-cap.

He began his scientific career at the Odessa University. Since 1893 he has headed the



Academician Nikolai Zelinsky

Chair of Chemistry at the Moscow University. He left its premises, but for a few years only. This was in 1911, when a group of radical professors resigned from the university as a protest against the reactionary policy of the tsarist government.

When the Germans employed poison-gas at the front during the World War I, Zelinsky initiated the use of activated carbon against poison substances.

In 1917, Zelinsky returned to the University. He became interested in the problems of the chemistry of oil, and made many innovations in the field of enriching poor oil products and turning them into products of high chemical value.

But Zelinsky's interests are by no means limited to oil alone. He has made many important discoveries in other spheres of organic chemistry, such as the chemistry of coal and the chemistry of albumin.

Nikolai Zelinsky has educated more than one generation of Soviet chemists. His pupils work in many cities of the Soviet Union and remember with gratitude and respect the years passed in common labour with this venerable scholar.



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